

Hafa Adai!

7 workers want IPI held liable for \$38K attorneys' fees. **PAGE 2**  
\$2M more in disaster recovery funding for the CNMI. **PAGE 7**

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## Tenorio gets 2 more years at CPA



Commonwealth Ports Authority board of directors chair Kimberly King-Hinds presides over a special meeting last Friday at the Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting classroom of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport last Friday afternoon. The board unanimously voted to give Christopher S. Tenorio and Edward Mendiola two more years as CPA executive director and deputy director, respectively.

FERDIE DE LA TORRE

» **CPA deputy chief Mendiola also gets another 2 years**

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE  
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Ports Authority board of directors unanimously approved Friday to renew the work contracts of CPA executive director Christopher Tenorio

S. Tenorio and deputy executive director Edward Mendiola.

All seven CPA directors approved giving both Tenorio and Mendiola two more years as executive director and deputy executive director, respectively, during a special meeting held at the Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting class-

See TENORIO on Page 4

If plans push through, Saipan could join the ranks of Fiji, the Maldives, and Maui as a world-class destination offering the best beach adventure and island-life experience.

Plans to revitalize Garapan  
See GARAPAN on Page 4

## Plan to make Garapan world-class destination in the works



By IVA MAURIN  
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REPORTER

A judge in the U.S. territory of Guam has ruled against a local businessman's attempt

# Man succumbs to collision injuries

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA  
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REPORTER

After lingering for days in the Intensive Care Unit of the Commonwealth Health Center, the man whose car was mowed

down in a car collision across the Shell gas station in Puerto Rico last week succumbed to his injuries last Friday morning.

According to *Saipan Tribune* sources, Sergio Apostol, 67, was pronounced dead Friday morning due to the sever-

ity of the multiple injuries he sustained from the collision that happened last Monday

See MAN on Page 4



Fight night at the Campanillas cockfighting club, in Toa Baja, Puerto Rico, Wednesday, Dec. 18, 2019. AP

## Guam judge nixes effort to nullify cockfighting ban

HAGATNA, Guam (AP)—A judge in the U.S. territory of Guam has ruled against a local businessman's attempt

to continue cockfighting despite a new American law banning it.

U.S. District Court of

Guam Magistrate Judge Joaquin Manibusan Jr. denied Sefrey Linsangan's motion for a preliminary injunction

against the new prohibition, the *Pacific Daily News* reported Friday.

See GUAM on Page 4

## INSIDE



### LOCAL

Three schools have placed first in their division at this year's caroling competition.

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### LOCAL

A team from Pohnpei is the overall winner of this year's Startup Weekend Micronesia.

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### BUSINESS

United Airlines, Inc., has agreed to pay \$321,000 to settle a sexual harassment lawsuit.

PAGE X



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# Local

## 7 workers want IPI held liable for \$38K attorneys' fees

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE  
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REPORTER

The seven workers who are suing Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC and its contractor and subcontractor over the alleged injuries they suffered in accidents at the worksite of IPI's casino/resort project in Garapan have asked the federal court to award them \$31,801 in attorneys' fees and \$156 in costs.

### » Berline seeks \$1,332; New York lawyer demands \$28,481

At a hearing last Dec. 12, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona granted the workers' counter-motion to compel IPI to respond to their discovery requests. Manglona ordered IPI to respond to all discovery requests.

The judge also granted the workers' motion to impose sanction on IPI and ordered the company to pay attorneys' fees to the plaintiffs/workers for bringing the motion to compel.

Manglona ordered the workers' lawyers, Bruce Berline and Aaron Halegua, to submit by last Thursday, Dec. 19, their motion for attorneys' fees and costs related to the filing of the counter-motion to compel.

In the plaintiffs' motion for attorneys' fees and costs filed in court last Thursday, Berline and New York City-based Halegua said they were forced to spend considerable time researching and responding to IPI's discovery objections, participating in teleconferenc-

es, opposing IPI's motion for a protective order, and preparing their own motion to compel.

Berline and Halegua said their request for an award reflecting 72.74 hours of attorney time and 11.98 hours of paralegal time is reasonable. Not included in that computation were the legal research performed by a third lawyer, time spent on the motion to stay, and Halegua's travel time to Saipan for oral argument, they said. They even further reduced Halegua's hours by 10 percent, they added.

They said that their proposed hourly rates of \$300 for Berline and \$417 for Halegua are all reasonable.

The lawyers said that Halegua's normal billing rate of \$450 an hour at his New York City law firm and far higher rates awarded to comparable attorneys further underscore the reasonableness of the rate he is asking for.

Berline claimed he had spent 4.44 hours, for a total amount of \$1,332. Halegua claimed he had spent 68.3 hours, for a total amount of \$28,481.

In the hearing held last Dec. 12, Manglona denied IPI's second motion to stay or suspend the proceedings in the seven workers' lawsuit.

Manglona also denied IPI's motion for a protective order that seeks to prevent all discovery in the workers' lawsuit pending the resolution of IPI's motion to stay or suspend the

proceeding in this case.

In IPI's motion for a protective order, its then-general counsel, Phillip J. Tydingco, said such an order is warranted since allowing discovery to proceed in light of IPI's motion to stay defeats or otherwise undermines the purpose and intent of the mandatory stay.

Tydingco added that this would cause IPI to "suffer annoyance, oppression as well as the deprivation of certain protections and rights associated with criminal proceedings."

In plaintiffs' opposition to IPI's motion for a protective order, Halegua and Berline said IPI's motion for a protective order must be rejected as it clearly just one more tactic to delay discovery.

The plaintiffs—Tianming Wang, Dong Han, Yongjun Meng, Liangcai Sun, Youli Wang, Qingchun Xu, and Xiyang Du—are suing IPI, MCC and MCC's subcontractor, Gold Mantis Construction Decoration (CNMI) LLC.

The plaintiffs, who are all Chinese nationals, are suing the defendants for alleged forced labor in violation of the Trafficking Victims Protection Re-authorization Act, forced labor in violation of the CNMI Anti-Trafficking Act, negligence, and liability for employees of subcontractor.

The workers alleged, among other things, that they were forced to work long hours for below minimum wage under extremely dangerous conditions at the casino-resort worksite.



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## 2 guilty pleas in fraudulently obtained driver's license

Two allegedly overstaying Chinese tourists who were recently arrested after presenting CNMI driver's licenses that they had obtained through fraud have separately pleaded guilty in federal court.

Guangjiang Deng pleaded guilty last Monday to participating in a conspiracy to illegally produce an identification document, while Huanqi Wu pleaded guilty last Friday to the same offense.

The two were allowed to remain free while awaiting to be sentenced. Deng will be sentenced on Dec. 27, 2019, while Wu's will be sentenced on March 13, 2020.

Deng and Wu were released on their own personal recognizance, but they were ordered to abide by their release conditions.

Assistant U.S. attorney Garth Backe appeared for the U.S. government. Mark Hanson and Colin Thompson served as the court-appointed counsel for Deng and Wu, respectively.

In Deng's case, he reportedly conspired with another person on June 21, 2017, to unlawfully produce an identification document.

The other individual would assist Deng to unlawfully obtain a CNMI driver's license through the submission of false or fraudulent documents to the CNMI Bureau of Motor Vehicles.

With the individual's assistance, Deng illegally obtained a CNMI driver's license on June 21, 2017.

Deng used and possessed the driver's license "in a manner that affected interstate commerce."

According to court records, it was Federal Protective Service inspector Sean White who encountered Wu last Thursday, Dec. 12, that led to the defendant's arrest after he presented a CNMI driver's license when asked for identification.

According to Homeland Security Investigations Task Force officer Cristin Duenas, a check with the DHS systems revealed that Deng entered the CNMI on Nov. 19, 2016, and was granted CNMI-only conditional parole by U.S. Customs and Border Protection until Dec. 1, 2016.

DHS records also showed that Deng was administratively arrested on Feb. 22, 2019, and is in removal proceedings.

Duenas said that Deng confessed that a Chinese recruiter offered to get him a driver's license for \$1,500. Deng agreed and paid the recruiter. With the help of another person, Deng managed to get a driver's license.

In Wu's case, the defendant did not sign a plea deal, but en-

tered a guilty plea right away. It was also White who inter-

cepted Wu last Dec. 6. DHS records confirmed that Wu entered the CNMI on Sept. 27, 2016 and was granted

CNMI-only conditional parole by U.S. Customs and Border Protection until Sept. 30, 2016. Wu reportedly confessed

to paying a "known conspirator" 2,100 RMB or about \$300 for help in getting his license. (Ferdie de la Torre)



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## MANIBUSAN JOINS AG COALITION

# ‘Keep fentanyl a Schedule I drug’

CNMI Attorney General Edward Manibusan was joined in a bipartisan coalition of all 56 attorneys general in calling for the U.S. Congress to permanently classify fentanyl-related substances as Schedule I drugs.

Schedule I drugs are defined as drugs with no currently accepted medical use

and a high potential for abuse.

In the letter, the attorneys general urge Congress to pass S. 2701, the Federal Initiative to Guarantee Health by Targeting Fentanyl Act, a bipartisan bill introduced by U.S. Sens. Rob Portman (R-OH) and Joe Manchin (D-WV).

the 50 states but not U.S. territories.

The federal ban went into effect last Dec. 20 (Dec. 21 in the CNMI)

The judge wrote that Linsangan failed to show how the federal ban deprives him of “life, liberty, or property without due process of law.”

He said Linsangan didn’t show that enacting the cockfighting ban discriminated against him or any person on account of his race, language or religion. Manibusan said the law applies uniformly throughout the 50 states and territories.

He said he sympathized with the argument that the people of Guam have been disenfranchised because the territory’s residents aren’t al-

Apostol said she can be reached through Facebook or cash donations are accepted through Western Union.

The Department of Public Safety has yet to release updates on the ongoing investigation of the accident.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, the car collision occurred at about 8pm on Dec. 16 across the Shell gas station in Puerto Rico.

Apostol was rushed to CHC right after and was immediately brought to the operating room for emergency surgery at about 9:30pm.

Shell surveillance footage that was leaked on social media showed an SUV speeding through Puerto Rico just across Shell at 7:59pm as the sedan that Apostol was driving turned slowly into the gas station.

The SUV collided with the passenger side of the sedan, sending it flying backwards as the SUV continued forward before hitting a nearby

power pole.

Commonwealth Utilities Corp. linemen were called to the scene to ensure that the power pole did not fall over, preventing a possible power outage in the area or affecting other connected power poles. Four police vehicles were dispatched to the scene, along with two Emergency Medical Service ambulances and tow trucks.

According to a lineman who was at the scene Monday evening and early Tuesday morning, they are sure the SUV collided with the power pole with great force because it caused the sturdy pole to crack at its base, nearly knocking it over completely.

CUC had to return in the morning to secure the impacted pole’s base and adjust the connected power poles in the area because the force of impact also affected the main pole across Shell.

and other challenges,” Ogunmor-Uludong said.

The plan for Garapan also includes the creation of the first Community Improvement District in the CNMI, modeled after the successful improvement district established in Waikiki, which is hoped to be a catalyst for further changes and improvements throughout Garapan.

“We are in the process of securing federal funding to overhaul and rehabilitate Garapan Core,” OPD deputy director Chris A. Concepcion said. “We look forward to seeing our plans finally become a reality for residents and visitors to enjoy. If approved, we will see Garapan transformed into the world-class destination it rightfully is.”

Members of the community who want to prove input on priorities and initiatives to support sustainable development in the CNMI may complete OPD’s survey at <https://bit.ly/35tfVgR>.

For more information, visit [opd.gov.mp](http://opd.gov.mp) or Facebook/Twitter/Instagram @CNMIOPD.

DEA precedent to schedule fentanyl-related substances.

The FIGHT Fentanyl Act will ensure law enforcement agencies and courts retain the tools needed to keep those who traffic in this deadly substance off the streets.

In the most recent data available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there were 72,000 drug-related deaths in the United States in 2017. Of those deaths,

roughly 40% involved fentanyl or a fentanyl-related compound.

Attorneys general from every state, territory and the District of Columbia signed the letter.

With the support of every attorney general, the National Association of Attorneys General has chosen to endorse the legislation as one of its official policy positions. NAAG typically endorses around a dozen policies a year. (PR)

## GUAM

From Page 1

Linsangan, described in court papers as a business owner involved in “gamefowl raising and competition” for 40 years, argued the ban was unconstitutional.

“It is not only part of his culture, custom and tradition but also a hobby, pastime, exercise and sport,” the lawsuit said.

President Donald Trump last year signed a law banning all animal fighting in the U.S. territories. The law took effect on Friday. Prior to the law, cockfighting had been illegal in

lowed to vote for president, nor are they allowed to elect voting members of Congress.

“The remedy for such disenfranchisement lies within the political, not judicial, process,” he wrote.

### PR to defy ban

On Wednesday, Gov. Wanda Vázquez of Puerto Rico, another U.S. territory, signed a bill authorizing cockfighting in defiance of the federal ban in a bid to protect a 400-year-old tradition practiced across the island.

The measure says it is legal for Puerto Rico to host cockfights as long as people don’t export or import cocks or any goods or services

related to cockfighting.

## TENORIO

From Page 1

room of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport.

Tenorio and Mendiola have been on their positions for three years now. Their contract is supposed to expire this Christmas Day.

CPA board chair Kimberly King-Hinds told Tenorio and Mendiola that they have her vote of confidence, but that comes with higher expectations. “I hope and I want to be clear, that my standards are going to be very high in terms of your performance for the next two years,” she said.

Tenorio, who said he is grateful for the opportunity and confidence that CPA has in him, concedes that his three years on the post has been a challenging yet rewarding experience.

Tenorio said he looks forward to continue steering CPA to accomplish its mission to develop air and sea navigation to and from the CNMI to its fullest potential.

Tenorio thanked the management and staff of CPA for “their dedication and cooperation” during the past three years he has taken the role of executive director.

“Their hard work has certainly eased the challenges and their dedication has become my reward,” he said.

Mendiola said he is very appreciative that the directors have confidence in him and Tenorio’s ability to continue moving the agency forward.

It was CPA director Pete P. Reyes who moved to approve the employment contract of Tenorio and Mendiola. Director Joseph Diaz seconded the motion.

Before the voting, director Barry Toves challenged Tenorio and Mendiola to act on projects for the Rota airport and seaport to improve its economy and benefit its people.

King-Hinds said that although CPA had a clear set of goals for last year, Super Typhoon Yutu hitting the CNMI in October 2018 did a number on the agency. They had to put certain projects on pause and redirect efforts, manpower, and resources to just basically get the airport back to working order, she said.

CPA’s inability to get things done

As word spread, those in the cockfighting industry cheered the news.

“There’s going to be work!” exclaimed Domingo Ruiz, who owns more than 30 cocks and has spent more than half a century in the business. “We’re going to keep the fight alive.”

Cockfighting generates an estimated \$18 million a year and employs some 27,000 people, according to the bill approved by Puerto Rico’s House and Senate.

reflects not just on Tenorio and Mendiola, but on herself as the chairperson of the CPA board and as a member of the board, King-Hinds said. She also feels that it reflects on every sitting board member.

She said the board has already briefed Tenorio and Mendiola on areas where they feel need clear improvement.

“And I am confident that the two of you have the ability to be able to address those issues,” she said.

Come January 2020, King-Hinds said, the board is going to set up a working action plan and clear directives in terms of where CPA should be going.

She noted that over the course of these past six months CPA was kind of struggling in terms of trying to get projects done and reallocating resources.

“I think the emergency has come and gone. And we shouldn’t be reactionary; we should be proactive,” King-Hinds said.

She said some of the issues that the stakeholders at the airport had brought up should have never reached all the way to the board level. For example, if there’s an issue with air-conditioning and lights in the airport’s hallway, it should not take months to be able to address those basic simple issues, she said.

King-Hinds said she’s giving her vote of confidence on Tenorio and Mendiola, but that the two should expect that her vote comes with higher expectation that they are going to work as a team.

“We will show the community that what we’re doing here, the time and efforts that we’re spending here, account for something and mean something. And that when we say that we are the primary economic engine...that we take those words seriously,” she said.

King-Hinds underscored the importance for CPA to work hand in hand with partners such as the Marianas Visitors Authority and the airline industry to be able to accomplish the goals and objectives of CPA’s mission.

The other directors present at the meeting were Ramon Tebuteb, Thomas Villagomez, and Roman T. Tudela Sr.

## MAN

From Page 1

night along Middle Road.

The two other females involved in the collision sustained minor injuries and were released after the incident.

Apostol is a Philippine national from the Antique province in the central Visayas and has been on Saipan for 33 years. He is survived by one son, Roberto.

Apostol’s niece, Ciaralyn Castillo Apostol, said that the family is working at this time on repatriating her uncle’s remains to his home province. As of now, they are awaiting approval from the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs to help fund the repatriation process but the approval could take up to four weeks, Ciaralyn Apostol said.

For those who would like to offer help to Apostol’s family, Ciaralyn

## GARAPAN

From Page 1

is being spearheaded by the CNMI Office of Planning and Development, under the Office of the Governor, with a vision to convert the CNMI’s tourist mecca into a family-friendly destination.

“Garapan has the potential to turn into a world-class destination and can rival some of the world’s most famous shoreline areas,” Gov. Ralph DLG Torres said. “We are hard at work to address concerns with utilities, capacity, water flow and quality through OPD’s overall comprehensive planning efforts. We are very excited for a big 2020 for the CNMI.”

Changes that are being planned by OPD and the Garapan Revitalization Task Force include increasing the number of parking spaces, a review of existing regulations for fire lanes and traffic flow, management of critical flood protection issues, and sewage, drainage, and electrical

system upgrades.

To make walking and public areas safer, OPD, the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., and the Department of Public Works have already replaced and relit 37 streetlights throughout Garapan.

OPD director Kodep Ogunmor-Uludong admits that economic growth in the CNMI is facing a number of critical challenges exacerbated by Super Typhoon Yutu and Typhoon Mangkhut.

Prior to the typhoons, OPD has been working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to kick off the implementation of the Smart, Safe Growth guidance framework funded through the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality.

“One of our aims is to protect our natural resources and position future development to account for the fact that we live in an area prone to devastating natural disasters, rapid technological and digital development, climate change,

## Ogumoro steps down as Zoning administrator

Therese T. Ogumoro has resigned as administrator of the Zoning office, saying she intends to pursue other challenges. "I decided to pursue an im-

portant plan in life. ... I'm glad to be able to continue my services to the CNMI and advise the board as they go through the transition," Ogumoro said at the

Zoning board meeting last Dec. 18.

Ogumoro served as Zoning administrator for 11 years. Yubert M. Alepuyo is, for the

moment, acting Zoning administrator.

Last Dec. 20, the Zoning board announced that they will be hiring to fill the administra-

tor position. Applicants are required to have a baccalaureate degree, but preferably a graduate degree in planning or related field and five years' experience in land use planning, comprehensive planning, or land use administration.

Application submissions should be addressed to Mariano Taitano, board chairman, and must be received at the Zoning Office by Jan. 7, 2020, at 4pm. Applicants must also include a letter of interest, a CNMI application form, and a résumé. Applications can be submitted via email, (addressed to acting Zoning administrator, yubert.alepuyo@zoning.gov.mp), fax ((670)234-9666), mail (P.O. Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950 USA) or hand-delivered to the Zoning Office, second floor of the Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

Any additional information can be found at the Zoning board website, [www.zoning.gov.mp](http://www.zoning.gov.mp). (Justine Nauta)

## IPI settling ex-VIP services host's suit

Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC is settling a law-suit filed against the company by a former VIP services host over alleged non-payment of overtime compensation, among other allegations.

IPI, through counsel Kelley M. Butcher, and plaintiff Shirline Loh, through counsel William M. Fitzgerald, filed a notice of settlement before the U.S. District Court for the NMI last Thursday.

Butcher and Fitzgerald told the court that they are settling the case and that they will soon ask it to dismiss the case as soon as the documentations are completed.

The lawyers requested that the pre-settlement telephone conference set for last Friday be continued to Jan. 17, 2020, which was the time set for the settlement conference.

District Court Magistrate Judge Heather L. Kennedy granted the request and ordered the parties to appear at the settlement conference on Jan. 17 if the case is not stipulated for dismissal.

In IPI's answer to Loh's amended lawsuit, Butcher said the company acted in good faith at all times and believes its actions were in compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Loh, a citizen of Singapore,

is suing IPI for Fair Labor Standards Act violation—unpaid minimum wage and unpaid overtime compensation, and conversion.

In her lawsuit, Loh asked the court hold IPI liable to pay her the minimum wage and overtime compensation, plus her shares of tips designated for the VIP hosts and allegedly

wrongfully converted by IPI for its own use.

She also demanded payment for liquidated and punitive damages, attorneys' fees and court costs.

Loh worked for IPI from Oct. 15, 2015, until August 2016.

In IPI's answer to the lawsuit, Butcher said Loh cannot recover against IPI to the extent that she failed to mitigate her alleged damages.

Butcher said IPI has not en-

## Public warned of dangerous rip currents along east-facing reefs

A high rip current risk remains in effect through 6pm today, Monday.

Based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam, and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center State Warning Point, there will be dangerous and frequent rip currents along east facing reefs of Guam, Rota, Tinian, and Saipan.

Rip currents can sweep even the best swimmers away from shore into deeper water.

The high risk of rip currents could extend to north facing reefs. Inexperienced swimmers should not enter the water. Experienced swimmers should

swim near a lifeguard. If caught in a rip current, relax and float. Do not swim against the current. Swim in a direction following the shoreline. If unable to escape, face the shore and call or wave for help.

The public is advised to avoid venturing out along east facing reefs and beaches. Strong rip currents will be life threatening. (PR)

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Members of the House of Representatives pay tribute to the late Francisco Deleon Guerrero Cabrera, through a commemorative resolution presented to his family last Friday, Dec. 20, at the House chamber on Capitol Hill. Cabrera was the creative mind behind the Mågas/Stressfree clothing brand, and the founder of 670 Rock Steady Shop.

IVA MAURIN

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands  
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION  
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514  
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp • Website: <http://www.nmhgov.net>

## NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY OF COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT FUNDS FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2020

THIS ADVERTISEMENT IS PAID FOR BY NMHC WITH CPD FUNDS.

The Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, **through the** Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) is announcing the availability of an **estimated** \$1,323,285.00 in Community Planning and Development (CPD) funds available from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. NMHC anticipates receiving an estimated amount of \$867,556.00 in Community Development Block Grants (CDBG); \$386,617.00 in Home Investment Partnerships (HOME); and, \$69,112.00 in Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds for Program Year (PY) 2020.

The CDBG funds, authorized under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, may be used for a wide range of community development activities to revitalize neighborhoods, provide affordable housing, expand economic opportunities, and improve community facilities and services. However, use of these funds must meet at least one of the national objectives which include: 1) to benefit low and moderate-income families; 2) to eliminate slum or blight conditions; or 3) to meet other urgent community development needs.

The CDBG program requires a grant recipient to certify that it will minimize displacement of persons as a result of activities assisted with CDBG funds. The CNMI government does not plan on undertaking any activity which will cause displacement of person. In the event of any unforeseen displacement resulting from any CDBG funded activity, the CNMI government will comply with the requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, its implementing regulation and applicable local law.

HOME funds may be used to create affordable housing through financing assistance, site acquisition or improvement, and rehabilitating existing residential dwellings as well as providing funds for new construction or purchase of a single family residential dwelling. Use of HOME funds must benefit low-income families.

ESG funds may be used to rehabilitate or convert to buildings into homeless shelters and for shelter operating expenses, supportive services and homeless prevention and **rapid re-housing** activities. Use of ESG funds must benefit the homeless.

**Applications for the use of CPD funds are available for pick up at the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) located in Garapan, Saipan; San Jose Village, Tinian; and, Songsong Village, Rota, beginning November 14, 2019. You may also obtain the application online at [www.nmhgov.net](http://www.nmhgov.net) in the section titled "Public Notice/Announcement" subsection "Community Planning Development"**

Applications must be submitted to the NMHC Offices in Garapan, Saipan (Saipan Residents); San Jose, Tinian (Tinian Residents); and, Songsong Village, Rota (Rota Residents) by **March 31, 2020, no later than 4:30 p.m. Applications submitted after March 31, 2020, will not be accepted.**

**A briefing will be conducted for interested applicants and for those applicants who have picked up an application for the use of CPD funds. The briefing will address the program requirements and regulations concerning the usage of CPD funds.**

**The schedules for briefing are as follows:**

**February 12, 2020, 6:00 p.m. for the island of Tinian  
February 13, 2020, 6:00 p.m. for the island of Saipan  
February 14, 2020, 6:00 p.m. for the island of Rota**

**We are encouraging all non-profit, for profit, and government service providers who are providing services to people with disabilities, homeless individuals, and emergency shelter administrators and operators to attend this briefing.**

For residents living on the island of Saipan, the briefing will be held at the NMHC Office in Garapan; Residents living on the island of Tinian, the briefing will be held at the NMHC Office in San Jose Village; and Residents living on the island of Rota, the briefing will be held at the Rota Mayor's Office Conference Room in Tatchog.

Accommodations for disabled individuals or other non-English speaking individuals who wish to attend the briefing are available upon request by giving at least 24 hours notice prior to the meeting so that such needs can be arranged and provided. Additional inquiries, concerning the CPD program, may be directed to Ms. Zenie P. Mafnas, Deputy Corporate Director or Ms. Tricia Tenorio, Planner at 234-6866 or 234-9447.

/s/  
Jesse S. Palacios  
Corporate Director

## House pays tribute to 670 Rock Steady founder Cabrera

By IVA MAURIN  
iva\_maurin@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

as a social worker for the Department of Public Health's Community Guidance Center.

To express his artistry, Cabrera began in mid-2000 to place his artwork on T-shirts, which he then sold from the trunk of his car, serving as the humble beginnings of his island-inspired clothing line, Stress-Free, and the Stress-free CNMI company.

In 2007, Cabrera, with several other fashion designers, opened the 670 Rock Steady Shop which paved the way for other artists to turn their fashion into profit. Through the years, the business expanded to include boutique kiosks at DFS Galleria, giving tourists the chance to buy a piece of Marianas fashion to take home with them.

Cabrera also received the U.S. trademark for his Mågas/Stressfree clothing, becoming one of a few businesses in the CNMI to achieve such a milestone.

Not only did Cabrera excel as an entrepreneur, he was also a philanthropist. Cabrera, who was a passionate supporter of the arts and an active participant in the annual Flame Tree Arts Festival, donated to many groups and organizations, and

## Marianas to experience annular solar eclipse this Thursday

By IVA MAURIN  
iva\_maurin@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

For anyone who wants to experience this phenomenon, it is important to remember to never look directly at the sun, even during an eclipse, as this can cause serious eye damage. You must use a pair of approved eclipse viewing glasses or construct a pinhole viewer.

Annular solar eclipses, although not as spectacular as total solar eclipses in which the entire sun is blocked by the moon, are still a rare event.

Because the moon's orbit around the earth, and the earth's orbit around the sun are elliptical, not circular, the observed diameter of the sun and moon vary throughout the year. Sometimes, the observed diameter of the moon is larger

than the sun, creating a total eclipse. Sometimes the observed diameter of the moon is smaller than the sun, creating an annular solar eclipse.

If the weather is clear, the eclipse will begin with the moon starting to block the edge of the sun at 3:35pm ChST. The eclipse will reach its maximum point at 4:56pm ChST and then the moon will slowly uncover the sun. At the maximum, approximately 90 percent of the sun will be blocked by the moon.

The posthumous recognition was presented to Cabrera's widow, May Reyes-Cabrera, their sons, and family.

Cabrera's father, Herman B. Cabrera, on behalf of the family, thanked the members of the House for the resolution and said that they would be treasuring it in their hearts.

"These islands that we call home, these rocks that we live on, are a lot steadier now for the work that he did," Castro said. "He always felt that the Marianas were destined for better days then, and today, the thing he worked hard to make possible is now a reality. Marianas, he left better than when he found it."

than the sun, creating a total eclipse. Sometimes the observed diameter of the moon is smaller than the sun, creating an annular solar eclipse.

If the weather is clear, the eclipse will begin with the moon starting to block the edge of the sun at 3:35pm ChST. The eclipse will reach its maximum point at 4:56pm ChST and then the moon will slowly uncover the sun. At the maximum, approximately 90 percent of the sun will be blocked by the moon.

Another annular solar eclipse will take place over the Marianas on June 21, 2020; however, next year's eclipse will cover a smaller percentage of the sun than this week's eclipse.

## \$2M more in disaster recovery funding for NMI

**WASHINGTON, D.C.**—The U.S. Department of the Interior will provide \$2 million to the CNMI government to streamline financial management and coordination of disaster recovery funding across local agencies and organizations receiving federal assistance as a result of impacts from Super Typhoon Yutu.

"We are grateful that Congress has provided assistance for disaster recovery in the [CNMI]," said Doug Domech, DOI assistant secretary, Insular and International Affairs, in announcing the grant award last Friday. "On my recent trip to the territory, I could still see houses and infrastructure that were impacted by [Super] Typhoon Yutu in 2018. The people of the CNMI will benefit from this assis-

### ONLINE

Full text of Public Law 116-20:  
<https://www.congress.gov/116/plaws/publ20/PLAW-116publ20.pdf>

tance to facilitate a complete and thorough utilization of all federal funds made available to assist in disaster recovery."

The grant will also be used to create a transparency website to track and report progress on all federal recovery program awards and recovery activities for the public and other interested parties.

Public Law 116-20, also known as the Additional Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act of 2019, made funding available to several federal departments and agencies for expenses related to the consequences of recent

## Nominations sought for SCC awards

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce is announcing three new awards to be celebrated at their annual Business Person of the Year Gala on Saturday, Jan. 25. These awards include Small Business of the Year, Nonprofit of the Year, and Chamber Member of the Year.

The Chamber is now seeking nominations from Chamber members in good standing for Small Business of the Year and Nonprofit of the Year. Nominations are due by today, Dec. 30, and can be made online by clicking the link at <https://www.saipan-chamber.com/signature-events/>.

For Small Business of the Year, any Chamber or non-Chamber member can be nominated that fits the following criteria:

- Less than 25 employees or less than \$1 million in gross revenue.

- Needs to have a business license.

- Needs to operate on Saipan for at least one year.

For Nonprofit of the Year, any Chamber or non-Chamber member can be nominated that fits the following criteria:

- Must have local or federal 501c documentation.

- Needs to have been operating on Saipan in operation for at least one year.

- Must provide services to residents on Saipan.

Additionally, five nominees for Chamber Member of the Year nominees will be selected by the Saipan Chamber of Commerce board of directors based on the following criteria:

- Must be a Chamber member for at least one year (company, individual, organization).

- Must have attended at least 20% of meetings for at least one committee in 2019.

- Must have assisted in co-

wildfires, hurricanes, volcanoes, earthquakes, typhoons, and other natural disasters. Two million was provided to the U.S. Department of the Interior for the CNMI. (PR)



### SAIPAN MORNING RUN

The weekly Saipan Morning Run started last Dec. 13, 2019, with, from left, instructor Ayano Braxton, visitor and former Saipan resident Sakiko Eda, instructor Akiko Hagiwara, and resident Floro S. Derexep. The free 7.6K run starts at 8am every Friday at Grandvrio Resort Saipan and passes through scenic sites in the main tourist district of Garapan. This is in line with the Marianas Visitors Authority's Sports Islands promotion of the Marianas and is jointly organized by the MVA and Pacific Development Inc. From the Grandvrio Resort Saipan lobby, participants will run through the American Memorial Park, Outer Cove Marine, and Gov. Eloy S. Inos Peace Park before returning to Grandvrio. MVA

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*Luke 2:14*

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# SVES, Agape win first place in Paseo caroling competition

By JUSTINE NAUTA  
justine\_nauta@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

San Vicente Elementary School, Agape Middle School, and Agape High School took home \$750 each for placing first in this year's caroling competition at the Paseo de Marianas in Garapan as part of the annual Christmas in the Marianas celebration.

Koblerville Elementary

School received \$500 for placing second, Agape Elementary School received \$300 for placing third, and as a consolation prize of \$150 were each given to Green Meadow Elementary School, Oleai Elementary School, Saipan International Elementary School, Grace Christian Academy, Mt. Carmel Elementary School, and Kagman Elementary School.

In the middle school division, Hopwood Jr. Middle School received \$500 for placing second, Green Meadow Middle School received \$300 for placing third, and Chacha Middle School received a consolation prize of \$150 for placing fourth.

For the high school division, Saipan Southern High School received \$500 for placing second, Grace Christian

Academy received \$300 for placing third, and Marianas High School received a consolation prize of \$150 for placing fourth.

The elementary division contest was held last Nov. 30, 2019, while the middle and high school contests were held on Dec. 7, 2019. The

winners were announced last Dec. 14, 2019. The information on the prizes they won were released to Saipan Tribune on Dec. 19, 2019.



San Vicente Elementary School is awarded first place in the caroling contest at the Christmas in the Marianas on Dec. 14, 2019, at Paseo de Marianas in Saipan. From left are Marianas Visitors Authority community projects manager Martin Duenas, MVA managing director Priscilla M. Iakopo, San Vicente Elementary representatives, and Misako Kamata of PDM Promoters.



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS  
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## ADDENDUM NO. 1 12/19/19 ITB20-GOV-015

**This is to notify all potential Bidders** that the items contained in this addendum are added to and/or deleted and become part of the specifications and bid documents for the above referenced bid.

1. The bid submission has been extended from December 30, 2019 to **January 30, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.**
2. Sealed bids must be marked ITB20-GOV-015 Supply, Construction and Implementation of the CUC Water System Mitigation Project. For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply located at the former Emergency Management Office, Building No. 1301, Ascencion Drive, Capitol Hill on Saipan no later than 10:00 a.m. ChST January 30, 2020. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to Bid. Notices of Intent to Bid must be received by the Director of Procurement & Supply no later than 10:00 a.m. ChST January 30, 2020 and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to a.magofna@dof.gov.mp. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than January 30, 2020 and the bid documents must be received no later than February 10, 2020. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be the cause for rejection of a bid. Bids will be publicly open and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply located at the former Emergency Management Office, Building No. 1301, Ascencion Drive, Capitol Hill on Saipan at 10:30 a.m. ChST February 11, 2020. However, if no notices of intent to bid are received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be open at 10:30 a.m. ChST January 30, 2020.
3. Revised Scope of Work – Bidders may pick up the revised Scope of Work at the Hazard Mitigation Office, Office of the Governor in Capitol Hill.
4. Specification for the Generators – Bidders may pick up the generator specifications at the Hazard Mitigation Office, Office of the Governor in Capitol Hill.
5. Revised Bid Schedule – Bidders may pick up the revised Bid Schedule at the Hazard Mitigation Office, Office of the Governor in Capitol Hill.
6. Request for Information – Bidders may pick up the Request for Information at the Hazard Mitigation Office, Office of the Governor in Capitol Hill.
7. Notes for revisions in Specifications – Bidders may pick up the notes for revisions in Specifications at the Hazard Mitigation Office, Office of the Governor in Capitol Hill.

**All other terms and conditions remain unchanged. Acknowledge receipt of this addendum on the Bid Form.** Questions concerning this project addendum shall be directed to Leona Deleon Guerrero in writing by e-mail to ldlguerrero@omb.gov.mp or fax to (670) 664-2408.

Virginia C. Villagomez  
Governor's Authorized Representative

Francisco C. Aguon, Acting Director  
CNMI Procurement and Supply

END OF ADDENDUM NO. 1  
Addendum No. 1 for ITB20-GOV-015

## DFW: Safety of tourists should be paramount

By IVA MAURIN  
iva\_maurin@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The Division of Fish and Wildlife has already collected almost \$50,000 since it started collecting a \$3 per passenger loading fee at the Smiling Cove Marina transient dock last Oct. 11.

DFW director Manny M. Pangelinan said that their operations at the Smiling Cove Marina have been running smoothly despite some operators opting to bring tourists to Managaha Island through the Garapan Fishing Base and the Commonwealth Ports Authority pier.

"I hope everybody cooperates so we can focus cumulatively," Pangelinan said. "We are concerned on how we can expand their [Marine Sports Association] place to do business, and the way we can expand that is to support the [entity] that is going to do the business right to provide for them."

He said the improvements to the transient dock would benefit not just the public, but the operators, and that the more they cooperate and support the passenger fee collection, the faster it would be for the DFW to work on the improvements.

The passenger fee will be used to maintain and operate the transient dock within the Smiling Cove Marina, which will be used to load and unload passengers, in lieu of the

Outer Cove Marina, which has been closed for being unsafe for public use.

"If they all say we need the channel dredged because it is not that deep, it takes money to dredge it. If they cooperate and they start supporting this activity, the faster I can go and hire a contractor to dredge it. If they say they need an additional slip, and they all contribute, then the faster we can do that," he said.

Some operators have been bringing their clients for loading to go to Managaha to the Garapan Fishing Base or at the Commonwealth Ports Authority dock, circumventing the need to pay the \$3 passenger loading fee.

"Right now, we have about 200 customers a day average. If we get the others and get up to 500, that is even better," Pangelinan said.

The first priority of the fee collection is to pay for the dock, and once it has been paid, rehabilitation would be started. "We have to pay the dock because the federal government pays for it. That dock was built for purposes of transient vessel coming from off-island to use."

However, when Typhoon Soudelor hit Saipan in 2015, the area was opened to boat owners who got displaced, at the request of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, who was then lieutenant governor, to assist

them so they would have a place to park and to load and offload passengers.

"Since then up to now, they were getting a lot of freebies. When we said I'm gonna charge you, those that are everyday users of the dock ran away," he said.

Pangelinan also raised concerns about the impression and image that the CNMI would have when they get loaded at the Garapan Fishing Base, where there are no facilities.

"When tourists come here and they [operators] bring them to [the fishing base], what would be their first impression about our marine sports activity? Perception is important. We are marketing Saipan as a tourist destination.

"Tourists come, they [will go] to CPA and it happens to be low tide. They have to go down this steep [incline]. What [would be] their impression? That our dock is unsafe. That 200 group of tourists, [when] they start talking, can make an impact to others."

Pangelinan stressed that the issue must be addressed as it is not about the money, but about perception and safety.

"We closed our marina for safety reasons, yet we allow that to happen there and at the fishing base, which is still an issue of safety. We're not really addressing safety by allowing that to happen."

## PUBLIC NOTICE

The U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) is considering a request for Federal assistance from the Northern Marianas Technical Institute to construct a Career and Technical Training facility in Koblerville, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), EDA is conducting an assessment of the potential of the proposed project to affect the environment and/or historic properties.

The project consists of a 2-storey, 29,239 sq.ft. concrete facility for heavy-trade shops, offices and classrooms. The project will be located at Koblerville, Saipan on a lot partly and formerly used as Isley airfield and situated in between a regulation-sized soccer field and an undeveloped area intended for homesteads. Project information is available for review during regular business hours at Northern Marianas Technical Institute on Manglen Way, Lower Base, Saipan, M.P. 96950 – telephone number (670) 322-6684 or by email at secretary@nmticnmi.org

If you have any information regarding potential impacts environmental resources or historic properties associated with this proposed project, please provide it in writing to:

U.S. Department of Commerce  
Economic Development Administration  
Attn: Regional Environmental Officer  
915 Second Avenue, Room 1890  
Seattle, Washington 98174-1012  
E-mail: RDImmick@eda.gov

Comments received in the EDA Seattle Regional Office by 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time on January 11th, 2020 will be considered. A copy of the NEPA/NHPA decisional document will be available upon request at the above EDA Regional Office.

Juana A. Cabrera  
Address: 6490 W. Emile Zola Ave.  
Peoria, AZ 85381  
Email: Juatalig@aol.com  
Tel: (562) 500-1361  
Pro Se

### IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Civil Action No. 19-0333  
IN THE ) AMENDED NOTICE OF  
MATTER OF ) HEARING ON PETITION  
THE ESTATE OF ) FOR LETTERS OF  
DONICIO ) ADMINISTRATION AND  
CHARFAUROS ) APPOINTMENT OF  
CABRERA ) ADMINISTRATRIX; and  
Deceased. ) AMENDED NOTICE TO THE  
CREDITORS

TO: THE GENERAL PUBLIC, ANY HEIRS,  
CLAIMANTS, OR CREDITORS OF THE LATE  
DORIS DOLORES PINAULA MUNA OR HER  
ESTATE.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Petitioner, Juana A. Cabrera, pro se, has petitioned the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to issue Letters of Administration for the Estate of Donicío Charfauros, Decedent.

The hearing on the Petition for Letters of Administration by Juana A. Cabrera, as Petitioner, is scheduled to be heard on January 9, 2020 at 10:00 a.m., at the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All interested persons or entities should appear at this hearing.

Any and all persons, creditors, or entities having claims against the Decedent of her Estate are hereby required by law to file their claims with the Clerk of Court within Sixty (60) days of the first publication, or the claim(s) will be barred. A copy of your claim should also be sent to Juana A. Cabrera, at the address hereinabove indicated.

Dated this 3rd day of December, 2019.  
/s/ Clerk of Court/Deputy Clerk of Court

# Hotel group signs on as a Tourism Summit sponsor

The Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands is lending its support to the Marianas Tourism Education Council in their work to educate students on the importance of tourism and how they can be involved in the industry, even at a young age.

HANMI chair Gloria Cavanagh presented a check for \$1,000 to MTEC chair Vicky Benavente and MTEC board member Catherine Perry, on Dec. 16, 2019, at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan. The funds will go toward the upcoming MY WAVE (Marianas Youth Welcome All Visitors Enthusiastically) Club Tourism Summit for CNMI Public School System students on Jan. 23, 2020.

"HANMI is exceptionally pleased to support MTEC again this year in their efforts to engage young people in meaningful discussions and activities about tourism and, more importantly, the role young people play in the supporting tourism," said Cavanagh. "The MTEC Tourism Summit is one of the highlights of HANMI's annual calendar of events, and we expect the participating students will be informed and inspired at the summit."

HANMI joins sponsors D&Q, DFS T Galleria E-Land Group (Kensington Hotel and PIC Saipan), Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan, Kanoa Resort, Matson, and Sorenson Media Group. The theme of this year's summit, co-organized by the Marianas Visitors Au-

## Senate OKs restricted use of phones when driving

Soon, restrictions on the use of mobile phones while driving will be implemented in the CNMI.

At a session Monday, all senators present voted to pass H.B. 21-35, a bill authored by Rep. Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) that restricts the use of mobile phones while driving.

Under the bill, it would be illegal to drive while on the phone unless the device is designed for hands-free use and is used in such a manner. Violators would be fined \$50 for a

## DOI releases \$327,022 to support JSA students from US insular areas

**WASHINGTON, D.C.**—The U.S. Department of the Interior has released \$327,022 in fiscal year 2020 funding support for the Junior State of America program (formerly the Junior Statesmen of America) for students from American Samoa, Guam, the CNMI, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, as well as the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands chair Gloria Cavanagh, center, donates \$1,000 on Dec. 16, 2019, at Pacific Islands Club Saipan to the Marianas Tourism Education Council Tourism Summit, which will be held on Jan. 23, 2020, with hundreds of school MY WAVE Club members. From left are MTEC board member Catherine Perry, Cavanagh, and MTEC chair Vicky Benavente.

thority, is "VolunTOURISM: Learn today. Lead tomorrow," reflecting the opportunities available to students to engage with the industry and learn today in preparation for the leadership roles they will take in the industry in the future. This year's summit will be held at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan with students from MY WAVE Clubs in grades 5-12 chosen by their respective schools to participate.

"Even as an non-profit organization themselves, HANMI has been a regular donor to MTEC for many years, and we are extremely grateful for their continued partnership as we share the tourism message with the younger generation," said Benavente. "We're again expecting 300 to 400 students for this year's summit, and we're looking forward to an educational and fun day of voluntourism activities."

The summit will also feature

exhibits by MVA, Micronesia Islands Nature Alliance, and others. Interested sponsors may contact MVA community projects specialist Jack Aranda at [jaranda@mymarianas.com](mailto:jaranda@mymarianas.com) or MVA community projects manager Martin Duenas at [mduenas@mymarianas.com](mailto:mduenas@mymarianas.com) or call 661-3210 for a sponsorship package.

MTEC was formed in 2002 to heighten the community's awareness of the importance of tourism to the well-being of the people of the Northern Mariana Islands. MTEC's stated mission is three-fold: to foster community understanding and support of the visitor industry; educate the general public, especially school students, about the value, social benefits, and economic contributions made to the community by the visitor industry; and to instill, improve and promote the *Hafa Adai-Tirow* hospitality spirit throughout the island community. (MTEC)

first offense and \$100 for each subsequent offense.

If the violation injures a person, the driver shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, when convicted, would have to pay a minimum fine of \$250 to a maximum of \$1,000, and can be imprisoned between 30 days and six months.

The restriction exempts emergency responders, including law enforcement officers, health care providers, emergency medical technicians, and firefighters.

The restrictions also do not apply to individuals using the mobile phone for emergency use, such as when making an emergency call to law enforcement, fire department, health care providers, and any other emergency service agency or entity.

"The Legislature finds that there are significant safety concerns regarding the widespread practice of using cellular telephones and other mobile electronic devices while operating motor vehicles," part of the bill states. (Iva Maurin)

Through this program, students will attend a three-week summer school program to develop reading, writing, speaking, and leadership skills on the campuses of either Georgetown, Princeton, or Stanford universities. Funding also supports a one-week academic preparation and community project program for the JSA program in the U.S. insular areas. (PR)

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## PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST DENGUE

Dengue fever is caused by the dengue virus, and is passed from person to person by mosquitoes. You cannot get dengue from touching or being coughed on.

It is usually a mild illness but can become serious, especially if the sick person has other medical conditions such as diabetes.

### Symptoms of Dengue Fever

- Sudden, high fever
- Severe headaches and pain behind the eyes
- Severe joint and muscle pain
- Fatigue
- Nausea and vomiting
- Skin rash that appears 2-5 days after the start of the fever

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, especially if you have just returned from a trip off-island, see your doctor right away.

### Protect Against Mosquitoes = Protect Against Dengue

Mosquitoes breed in still water. Get rid of mosquito populations around your home by dumping out buckets, tires, toys, and anything that holds water.

Use Insect repellent

Cover up! Wear long sleeves when outside and cover strollers and cribs with mosquito netting. Close doors and windows during sunrise and sunset, when mosquitoes are most active.

Put screens on doors and windows and make sure they do not have holes.

For more information on dengue, contact the CHCC Preparedness Program at 234-8950.

For more information on how to control mosquitoes, contact the Bureau of Environmental Health at 664-4780.



THIS PROJECT WAS SUPPORTED BY GRANT NO. NU90TP922040 / CFDA NO. 93.069 – PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FROM THE CDC TO THE COMMONWEALTH HEALTHCARE CORPORATION.



# Opinion

## Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXIX, Issue No. 251

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## EDITORIAL

### Why is lowering drug costs a partisan issue?

**V**irtually ignored in the impeachment haze, the U.S. House has passed common-sense legislation that finally would give the federal government the power to negotiate lower prescription drug prices with pharmaceutical companies for Medicare patients. Yet President Donald Trump has threatened to veto the bill and the Senate is expected to ignore it. The rising cost of prescription drugs is a key issue nationwide, and at least the House's action should put pressure on the Senate to pursue its own solution.

It's difficult to fathom why allowing Medicare to negotiate for better drug prices is a partisan issue. Trump campaigned on the issue in 2016. Yet the legislation passed the House last week along partisan lines, with every Democrat voting for it and all but two Republicans opposing it.

There are plenty of good provisions in the House bill that would benefit Medicare recipients beyond allowing the government to negotiate for better prices for up to 250 commonly used drugs. For example, there would be a new limit on out-of-pocket drug costs of \$2,000. Drug manufacturers also would be required to pay rebates back to Medicare if drug prices rise faster than inflation. But the legislation also would benefit everyone else, because it would require drugmakers to offer the negotiated Medicare price to private insurers.

What would be the practical impact? More than 19,000 Florida women are expected to be diagnosed with breast cancer this year, and the House legislation is projected to lower the average cost of the breast cancer medication Ibrance by 65%, from \$69,000 to \$23,900 per year. More than 21% of Floridians have arthritis, and the House legislation is projected to lower the cost of most arthritis drugs from about \$40,000 a year to \$10,000 a year. That's real money.

The Republican-controlled Senate is where good legislation passed by the Democrat-controlled House goes to die, regardless of whether it is reforming campaign finance laws, raising the minimum wage or banning offshore drilling. The least Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell should do is start moving a bipartisan Senate bill that includes provisions in the House legislation such as a limit on out-of-pocket expenses on prescription drugs for Medicare recipients and the rebate requirements for drug companies. The Senate bill unfortunately does not include the key provision that would allow the federal government to negotiate lower drug prices, but that could be an issue to negotiate later.

The high cost of prescription drugs affects everyone, and it should not be a partisan issue. Now that the U.S. House has passed its legislation, the Senate should take up the issue and work toward a compromise that both Republicans and Democrats can embrace.

(c)2019 Tampa Bay Times (St. Petersburg, Fla.)



### The perils of Christmas travel with young kids

**F**ORT WORTH, Texas—Every year, I tell myself this is the last time.

I am not doing it again. I am not flying across the country with my (now) three children—all of whom are younger than 5—over the holidays.

And every year, I find myself white-knuckling the last 30 minutes in flight, digging through my purse for snacks and reciting "Hail Marys" as I try to keep my excited but travel-weary children seated, sated and quiet until landing.

Please, no one scream. Please, no one stand up. Please, no one throw-up.

And please, Lord. Let us not be that family.

(If you fly during the holidays, you know exactly the family to which I am referring. The one that everyone keeps staring at. The one that no one wants to sit near on the plane.)

Sometimes, that's us. Merry Christmas, fellow passengers. And my profound apologies.

A friend reminded me recently of something that usually slips my mind somewhere between airport security and baggage claim: Christmas (or Advent) is a penitential season.

It's a time of repentance; it's a time of sanctification.

And nothing is quite as chastening and humbling as peeling an exhausted toddler off the terminal floor, while her sister frantically yanks your arm crying for a bathroom, her hungry infant brother screams in the carrier, and you awkwardly struggle to get the three over-filled backpacks (and their respective children) on and off the plane.

All this while trying to suppress a string of four-letter words from escaping your lips.

All this while maintaining some small degree of personal dignity. Traveling is stressful, especially around the holidays and al-

**By CYNTHIA M. ALLEN**

Fort Worth Star-Telegram

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ways where children are concerned. But like so much of parenting, it's also character-building and chock full of lessons for life.

It reminds us that life is lived best when we are tolerant, restrained, generous and gracious—with ourselves and with others.

And in many circumstances, those graces are visited back on us.

Every time I've flown with my children, I've been stunned at the remarkable kindness exhibited by total strangers.

The woman who offers to hold my baby while I help my toddler put her shoes back on.

The teenager who carries our third backpack to our seats so I can keep my children from tearing down the aisle.

The man several rows back who entertains my fussy infant with his silly faces.

Whether it's out of sympathy or pity, there's always someone who wants to be of service. Some offer emotional support. There are knowing smiles and respectful nods.

There are words of encouragement: You're doing a great job. Your kids are so well-behaved (probably a lie). What a beautiful

See CHRISTMAS on Next Page

**EDITORIAL POLICY**

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at [www.saipantribune.com](http://www.saipantribune.com).

## Election too important to be left to voters

**T**he Democrats believe that the 2020 election is too important to be left to the voters.

It's obvious that President Donald Trump withheld defense aid to Ukraine to pressure its president to commit to the investigations that he wanted, an improper use of his power that should rightly be the focus of congressional investigation and hearings.

Where the Democrats have gotten tangled up is trying to find a justification that supports the enormous weight of impeaching and removing a president for the first time in our history.

They've cycled through different arguments. First, Trump's offense was said to be a quid pro quo, a phrase cast aside for supposedly being too Latin for the public to understand; then it was bribery, which has lost ground lately, presumably because of the inherent implausibility of the charge; now, the emphasis is on Trump's invitation to the Ukrainians to "meddle" and "interfere" in our elections.

This is posited to be an ongoing threat. Nancy Pelosi said in her statement calling on the House to draft articles of impeachment: "Our democracy is what is at stake. The president leaves us no choice but to act because he is trying to corrupt, once again, the election for his own benefit."

House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerry Nadler said on "Meet the Press" that Trump has to be impeached "for posing the considerable risk that he poses to the next election." Asked if he thinks the 2020 election will be on the up and up, he said: "I don't know. The president, based on his past performance, will do everything he can to make it not a fair election."

The gravamen of this case is that the election is too crucial to allow the incumbent president of the United States, who is leading in key battleground states and has some significant chance of winning, to run. In fact, the integrity of the election is so at risk that the U.S. Senate should keep the public from rendering a judgment on Donald Trump's first term, or deciding between him and, say, his nemesis Joe Biden.

Of course, it's possible to imagine a circumstance where a president would indeed present such a grave risk to our elections that he'd have to be removed. This is a reason that we have the impeachment process in the first place. But what's the real harm that Trump's foolhardy Ukraine adventure presented?

The bottom line is that after tsk-tsking Trump for refusing to say in advance that he'd accept the outcome of the 2016 election, Democrats have steadfastly refused to truly accept the 2016

**By RICH LOWRY**

King Features Synd., Inc.



*Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.*

result (allegedly the work of the Russians) and now are signaling they won't accept next year's election either, should they lose again.

Given their druthers, Trump wouldn't be an option for the voters. They are rushing their impeachment, in part, because they know that as November 2020 approaches, it becomes steadily less tenable to portray the man who wants to run in an election as the threat to democracy and the people who want to stop him as its champions.

With every day that passes, the Democrats risk creating the perception that they themselves are a threat to the 2020 election.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Response to IPI statement of its past due debt to USA Fanter Corp.

*Editor's Note: The following letter is being reprinted to correct a previous letter to the editor that was typed incorrectly.*

USA Fanter strongly denies all falsehoods alleged by this IPI statement—false reports, forged project quantity numbers, increased units of materials used and prices, and double accrued charges. Ridiculous!

USA Fanter has been in the business as a general contractor since 1992 and has never been accused of lying, falsifying reports, not paying their employees, not paying their bills or had

their offices raided by the FBI.

USA Fanter is a duly licensed casino non-gaming vendor.

A good business reputation means everything, especially in a small community like the CNMI. IPI can be assured that USA Fanter will protect itself and its reputation to the fullest extent allowed by law.

With respect to this project, the facts are as follows:

1. On May 27, 2019, IPI prepared the solicitation for the required construction work requiring labor, materials, equipment, and installation;

2. IPI chose USA Fanter's proposal among other submitted proposals;

3. IPI prepared the proposed contract;

4. On June 24, 2019, after negotiating the final terms of the contract, IPI and USA Fanter executed the IPI-prepared contract;

5. IPI reviewed and approved all USA Fanter billings. over the progress completion period of June 24, 2019, to Sept. 24, 2019, USA Fanter had transmitted six billings—an initial billing for a down payment and followed by five work progress billings.

6. IPI project site engineer, in an email dated Sept. 27, 2019, approved the fifth work progress billing with the following message: "I've no adverse comments with your revised (progress) billing No. 5. Please submit work done invoice formally for our proceed payment application accordingly. Thanks"

White Coconut Computer Services, RC Electronics, Gold Ribbon, Graphics Inc, CTSI Logistics, MarPac Inc., McDonald's, MGA Insurance, Mr. & Mrs. Pablo Mendoza, Kanoa Resort, Foremost/Coca Cola, Beautyderm Saipan by Abby Whang, RNV Construction, Taro Sue, TransAmerica, Motion Autoshop, Marine Auto Inc, Happy Market, Hannam Market, and Ms. Marcel Divina.

*Maraming, maraming salamat po.*

**Marcelo V. Masilungan**

President, UFO

## Thank you

The United Filipino Organization CNMI, Inc. would like to thank the UFO Paskong Pinoy executive committee, the event coordinator/advisers and emcees, its nine-unit organization members, and volunteers.

Special thanks goes to all our sponsors, both major and minor: Tan Siu Lin Foundation, Marianas Business Plaza, LBC Saipan, Pacific Amusement, National Office Supply, Supertech Inc dba



What did IPI site engineer approve? A progress completion of 41.1%, totaling \$2.39 million of the total contract \$5.8 million.

7. IPI has only paid \$300,000.00 in August 2019 after a threatened notice of work stoppage was issued on Aug. 20, 2019.

USA Fanter is willing to negotiate a payment plan for what is owed.

IPI, on the other hand, wants to renegotiate a duly executed contract (that they themselves prepared and with required work in progress) with the obvious intent to force USA Fanter to discount their billings and settle for much less than what was contracted.

USA Fanter has engaged the services of an attorney for collection.

Doing business with IPI should not be a risk. They hold an exclusive casino license.

The regulatory process is supposed to equally protect IPI, the CNMI, and vendors for their respective interests.

Something has gone terribly wrong and, sadly, local vendors are being victimized.

**Guocao Qian**

President, USA Fanter

## CHRISTMAS

*From Page 10*

family.

For an exasperated mom, any comment that isn't a criticism of my parenting skills makes all the difference in the world.

Of course, not all fellow flyers are understanding. Some are less than thrilled that your screaming infant is within earshot; some couldn't care less that their suitcase is blocking your child's path to the bathroom.

Not everyone is going to find your drooling baby adorable. Not everyone is going to appreciate just how hard it is to keep three children happy on a three hour flight.

That's OK. There are lessons in that, too.

When facing adversity, maintaining grace is important. Apologizing, even when it's unwarranted, can be virtuous.

Showing others respect, even when it's not returned, is never a mistake.

And forgiving yourself when things don't go as planned—when your kids aren't the perfect angels they are at home—is necessary.

Because years from now, when my kids are grown and I'm flying solo, I will smile at a mom and her kids, offer to hold her baby while she wrangles her toddler, and miss these chaotic years.

A few days ago, I opened a still childless friend's Christmas card which featured photos of her and her husband scaling ocean bluffs and cavorting around Europe. The card boasted: "Because one adventure is never enough..."

I thought: Oh, honey, you haven't been on an adventure until you've flown with kids. Just you wait.

# The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN				
TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
86°	77°	86°	76°	86°
86°	76°	87°	77°	87°
77°	86°	87°	77°	87°

## YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



**PICTURE TIME: 8:29 AM, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2019**

WESTERN NORTH PACIFIC BETWEEN EQUATOR AND 25N FROM 130E TO 180.

Guam weather radar shows isolated showers moving through the Marianas waters. The VAD wind profile indicates winds of 23 to 28 knots just off the surface which build to between 30 and 37 knots through the next 7 thousand feet of the air. The buoys reveal combined seas of 8 to 11 feet composed of trade-wind waves and swell, both from the northeast.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: [www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/](http://www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/)

MICRONESIA		▼ ▲ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	84° / 76°
Palau	Thunderstorms	84° / 78°
Yap	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	85° / 79°
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	85° / 77°
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	85° / 77°
Majuro	Mostly Sunny	84° / 79°

AROUND THE GLOBE		
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	73° / 61°
Beijing	Mostly Cloudy	34° / 21°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	73° / 66°
Honolulu	Showers	81° / 73°
London	Partly Cloudy	48° / 39°
Los Angeles	Showers	60° / 49°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	90° / 75°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	73° / 54°
Miami	Windy	75° / 62°
New York	Partly Cloudy	48° / 34°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	55° / 46°
Paris	Showers	50° / 43°
Busan	Partly Cloudy	54° / 43°
Rome	Mostly Sunny	61° / 45°
Salem	Showers	59° / 44°
San Francisco	Showers	52° / 45°
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	43° / 27°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	50° / 36°
Washington, DC	Sunny	51° / 35°

NMI CRIME STOPPERS	
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:	
■ Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone	
■ *11 on any IT&E cellular phone	
■ Log on to the internet at <a href="http://www.nmicrimestoppers.net">www.nmicrimestoppers.net</a>	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY FEET		
6:07 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.48
11:17 AM	LOW TIDE	0.80
4:57 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.86
-	-	-

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:38 AM	5:52 PM
Tuesday	6:39 AM	5:53 PM
Wednesday	6:39 AM	5:53 PM
Thursday	6:40 AM	5:54 PM
Friday	6:40 AM	5:54 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	3:29 AM	3:22 PM
Tuesday	-	4:27 AM	4:10 PM
Wednesday	-	5:26 AM	5:02 PM
Thursday	-	6:24 AM	5:56 PM
Friday	-	7:20 AM	6:51 PM

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 2, 2019				
DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS
<b>SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)</b>				<b>GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN</b>
UA117 9:15am 9:55am Daily				UA174 7:30am 8:11am Daily
UA105 6:20pm 7:00pm 2, 4, 6				UA104 4:45pm 5:26pm 2, 4, 6
<b>SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)</b>				<b>NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN</b>
SKY811 10:15am 3:00pm Daily				SKY816 4:35pm 7:30pm 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
				SKY816 5:05pm 8:00pm 6
<b>SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)</b>				<b>BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN</b>
7C3451 3:20am 6:30am Daily				7C3452 9:35pm 2:30am+1 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
				7C3452 10:05pm 2:30am+1 3
<b>SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)</b>				<b>SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN</b>
TW308 2:05am 6:05am Daily				OZ6233 8:00am 1:20pm 2, 4, 6
OZ626 2:10am 6:05am 1				OZ623 8:55am 2:30pm 1, 3, 5, 7
OZ626 2:50am 6:25am 3, 7				7C3402 10:10am 3:30pm Daily
OZ626 2:50am 6:40am 2, 4, 5, 6				TW309 11:10am 4:25pm Daily
7C3403 4:35am 8:35am Daily				OZ625 7:30pm 1:00am+1 7
OZ6243 3:20pm 7:10pm 2, 4, 6				TW307 7:45pm 1:05am+1 Daily
OZ624 3:50pm 7:40pm 1, 3, 5, 7				OZ625 8:20pm 1:40am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
7C3401 4:30pm 8:25pm Daily				7C3404 10:10pm 3:40am+1 Daily
TW310 5:25pm 10:15pm Daily				
<b>SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)</b>				<b>SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN</b>
3U8648 6:10am 8:50am 4, 7				3U8647 10:30pm 4:30am+1 3, 6
<b>SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (GHG)</b>				<b>HANGZHOU (GHG)-SAIPAN</b>
JD396 7:30am 12:05pm 1				JD395 8:05am 3:30pm 4
JD396 4:50pm 7:55pm 4				JD395 8:50pm 5:00am+1 7
<b>SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)</b>				<b>BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN</b>
MU764 1:30am 6:00am 3, 5, 7				MU763 4:50pm 12:30am+1 2, 4, 6
<b>SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)</b>				<b>MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN</b>
OZ626/701 2:10am 10:35am 1 via ICN				UA184/174 12:40am 8:11am+1 3, 6 via GUM
OZ626/701 2:50am 10:35am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN				OZ702/625

# Pohnpei team named winner in 1st Startup Weekend



The team from Chuuk.

A team of budding entrepreneurs from Pohnpei with their business pitch Drop & Drop has been announced the overall winner of this year's Startup Weekend Micronesia, a three-day entrepreneurial event associated with Google Techstars Startup Weekend.

Organized by Professional Master of Business Administration students from the University of Guam School of Business and Public Administration in partnership with the Pacific Islands Small Business Development Center Network, the event was held beyond Guam and Saipan for the first time on seven Micronesian Islands.

Drop & Drop is a delivery service for the convenience of Pohnpei residents for anything from food items to laundry. The team members included Michelle Kamber, Bernarda Mathias, Yolanda Waltu, and Yuchi Leopold.

The team will come to Guam in January to receive

\$5,000 in seed funding courtesy of Bank of Guam to start their business.

"As a person who used to live in the city where life is fast-paced and you can get served as long as you have a phone, moving to Pohnpei is the opposite. Door-to-door delivery doesn't exist," Kamber said. "I'm very grateful for the Startup Weekend and for all the people behind it to help us bring up our business ideas. The people of Pohnpei need delivery services to move things faster and bury the *mañana* habit."

The Micronesia-wide event, held from Nov. 7-9, had a total of 119 participants, making up 30 teams that competed for the best business idea in their event location.

"In just 54 hours, participants experienced the highs, lows, excitement, and pressure that contribute to the life of a startup," said Ione Skye Llagas, a PMBA student at the

University of Guam and program manager for the event. "The Startup Weekend Micronesia team was able to accomplish our goal for this project—to inspire and give the participants a fun and experiential environment to work on their business ideas."

Cheery Yeban, another PMBA student and assistant program manager for the event, said the participants on the islands where this event was launched for the first time were open to learning and participating as much as possible during the event.

Each island had its own winning team, all of which received prizes from local sponsors. The winning teams were:

- Chuuk: BioVerse, a business to make eco-friendly bags out of taro and tapioca. Team members: AM Johnson, Deondre Anne Zaldivar, KM Edwin, Mark Mathew Tammad, Aliksrue Tolenna, and Kiva Rinae Meno.



The team from Saipan.



The Kosrae team.

UNIVERSITY OF GUAM



The team from Guam.

UNIVERSITY OF GUAM



The Yap team.

UNIVERSITY OF GUAM



The Palau team.

UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

- CNMI: Islander RC, a remote-control car race-track business idea by Korky Aguon.

- Guam: IslaCor, Damen Michael Borja's business startup idea for a mobile tour guide application that provides the locations of Guam's hidden gems.

- Kosrae: Carve with Heart, a business specializing in hand-carved cutting boards and utensils using mahogany and reclaimed wood. Team members: Greg George, Paliknoa Sigrah, and Srue George.

- Palau: Alii Blengur, an authentic Palauan restau-

- rant idea by Yoslau Victor that is designed to cater to tourists while promoting the Palauan culture.

- Pohnpei: Drop & Drop, a convenient and efficient delivery service for items from food to laundry. Team members: Michelle Kamber, Bernarda Mathias, Yolanda Waltu, and Yuchi Leopold.

- Yap: 691 Mogethin Buffet, a buffet restaurant business that partners with local farmers and fishermen to offer locally sources dishes. Team members: Abigail Mongon, Arleen Tretnoff, Jaret Tailigtag, Jesher Elab, and Beriteiti

Margie Teburea.

The PMBA students who hosted Startup Weekend Micronesia are Christina Thai, Nicole Mesa, Kylene Hsieh, Cheery Yeban, Erica Pangalinan, Aubreeana Taylor, Christiana Tuck, Jenna Leon Guerrero, Ione Skye Llagas, and David Kamai. Startup Weekend events have been launched in more than 150 countries globally. The first one held in this region was in Guam in 2014, and it expanded to Saipan in 2016. This was the first year it has been offered in Palau, Chuuk, Kosrae, Yap, and Pohnpei. (PR)



The team from Pohnpei.

UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

UNIVERSITY OF GUAM

# Business

## TO SETTLE EEOC DISCRIMINATION SUIT

# United to pay \$321K and fight internet harassment

**SAN ANTONIO, Texas**—United Airlines, Inc., a Chicago-headquartered international airline operating in over 300 airports across five continents, has agreed to pay \$321,000, plus attorney's fees, to settle a sexual harassment lawsuit brought by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the federal agency announced today.

The EEOC's lawsuit alleged that, over the course of many years, a United captain frequently posted explicit images of a flight attendant to multiple websites, without her consent, making reference to

her name, home airport, and the airline's tagline "Fly the Friendly Skies." The EEOC's suit asserted that the images were seen by co-workers of the flight attendant, as well as untold numbers of potential passengers, causing her humiliation and embarrassment and adversely affecting her work environment.

Such alleged inaction when an employer is aware of sexual harassment violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits employment discrimination based on sex, including harassment that creates a hostile environment. The EEOC filed suit in U.S. District Court for the Western District of Texas, San Antonio Division (EEOC v. United Airlines, Inc., Civil Action

No. 5:18-cv-817) after first attempting to reach a voluntary settlement through its conciliation process.

"Employers are best served when they fulfill their obligation to be diligent in preventing and correcting sexual harassment, whether the offensive conduct takes place in the workplace or involves misconduct by an employee on the internet that affects the work environment," said Philip Moss, a trial attorney in the EEOC's San Antonio Field Office. "This resolution can serve to send a message to employers that they should

have robust anti-harassment policies that are vigorously self-enforced."

The consent decree resolving this case, approved by U.S. District Judge Xavier Rodriguez, requires the company to pay monetary damages of \$321,000, plus attorney's fees for the flight attendant and to provide notice to company employees of their protections under Title VII. The decree further requires the airline to revise its sexual harassment policies explicitly to include harassing conduct perpetrated through the internet or social media and affecting the work environment — whether on or off duty.

EEOC Supervisory Trial Attorney Eduardo Juarez of the EEOC's San Antonio Field Office explained, "Employers must not ignore harassment complaints simply

because the harasser holds a position of authority."

Robert A. Canino, regional attorney of the EEOC's Dallas District, added, "This case highlights the issues of employer accountability for harassment in the modern workplace. Employee workdays and jobsites are no longer defined by timecards and the walls of a building, but by the breadth of a digital day and the reach of electronic communications. The policy United has agreed to implement can perhaps serve to provide ideas for other companies adapting to the increased risks posed by employee misuse of technology."

The flight attendant who intervened in the EEOC's federal lawsuit was individually represented by attorney Colin Walsh of the Austin, Texas office of Wiley Walsh, P.C.



## Catalog retailers see reason for optimism after declines

**PORTRLAND, Maine** (AP)—Catalogs, those glossy paper-and-ink offerings of outdoor apparel, kitchenware and fruit baskets, are not yet headed for the recycling bin of history.

Until recently, the future appeared grim for the mailbox-stuffers. A one-two punch of postal rate increases and the Great Recession had sharply cut their numbers. Common wisdom had everything retail-related moving online.

But a catalog-industry rebound appears in the works, fueled in part by what might seem an unlikely group: younger shoppers who find it's sometimes easier, more satisfying and even nostalgic, flipping pages rather than clicking links.

Industry experts say that all those catalogs crammed into

mailboxes this holiday season are a sign that mailings have stabilized — and may be growing — after a decline of about 40% since the Great Recession.

New companies are mailing catalogs. And even died-in-the-wool online retailers like Amazon and Bonobos are getting into the act.

"They're tapping out on what they're able to do digitally," said Tim Curtis, president of CohereOne, a direct marketing agency in California. "They've got to find some new way to drive traffic to their websites."

Catalog retailers slashed mailings, and some abandoned catalogs altogether, after a major U.S. Postal Service rate increase and the start of the recession in

late 2007. Catalog numbers dropped from about 19 billion in 2016 to an estimated 11.5 billion in 2018, according to the American Catalog Mailers Association.

The industry still faces challenges, but there's reason for some optimism, said Hamilton Davison, president of the mailers association.

Millennials who are nostalgic for vinyl records and all things vintage are thumbing through catalogs and dog-earing the pages. It's a new demographic roughly from 22 to 38 that's helping to breathe some new life into the sector, industry officials say.

In fact, millennials are more likely than baby boomers to visit a store based on mailings, according to the U.S. Postal Service inspector general.

Sarah Johnson says she loves flipping through catalogs at her convenience — but gets her hackles up when retailers fill her email inbox.

"Promotion emails drive me crazy," said Johnson, 29, of Vernal, Utah. "When there's a catalog lying on the table, it feels like it's my choice to pick it up and flip through it. When it arrives in my inbox it feels like it's imposing on me," she said.

Angela Hamann, another millennial, says she prefers catalogs because it's easier than scrolling through web-pages to evaluate a retailer's offering.

"It's a great way to assess what a company has to offer without making a bunch of clicks," said Hamann, 37, of New Gloucester, Maine.

## Twitter, Facebook ban fake users; some had AI-created photos

**NEW YORK** (AP)—Twitter has identified and removed nearly 6,000 accounts that it said were part of a coordinated effort by Saudi government agencies and individuals to advance the country's geopolitical interests.

Separately, Facebook said it removed hundreds of Facebook accounts, groups and pages linked to inauthentic behavior from two separate groups, one originating in the country of Georgia and one in Vietnam, which targeted people both in Vietnam and in the U.S.

Facebook said some of the accounts used profile photos generated by artificial intelligence and masqueraded as Americans. It is one of the first such misinformation efforts to use material generated by AI.

Tech companies have stepped up efforts to tackle misinformation on their services ahead of next year's U.S. presidential elections. The efforts followed revelations that Russians bankrolled thousands of fake political ads during the 2016 elections to sow dissent among Americans.

Twitter's and Facebook's announcements underscore the fact that misinformation concerns aren't limited to the U.S. and Russia.

In a blog post Friday, Twitter said the removed Saudi accounts were ampli-

fying messages favorable to Saudi authorities, mainly through "aggressive liking, retweeting and replying." While the majority of the content was in Arabic, Twitter said the tweets also amplified discussions about sanctions in Iran and appearances by Saudi government officials in Western media.

"Governments have started to launch influence campaigns the same ways commercial enterprises launch campaigns to sell detergent or cars," said James Ludes, a national defense expert who teaches international relations and public policy at Salve Regina University in Rhode Island.

He said the Russian efforts in 2016 showed it was possible to "actually change public attitudes through the targeted use of social media."

While the attempts to root out the campaigns may seem like a game of whack-a-mole, he said companies have at least shown progress in taking steps to identify and root out manipulation campaigns run by foreign powers.

Twitter began archiving tweets and media it deems to be associated with known state-backed information operations in 2018. It shut 200,000 Chinese accounts that targeted Hong Kong protests in August.

# Nation

## Plans for impeachment trial get foggy before holiday break

**WASHINGTON** (AP)—President Donald Trump is in sunny Florida after his historic impeachment, while plans for his speedy trial back in Washington remained clouded. Senate leaders jockeying for leverage have failed to agree on procedures for the trial.

Trump is still expected to be acquitted of both charges in the Senate, where Republicans have the majority, in what will be only the third presidential impeachment trial in U.S. history. Proceedings are expected to begin in January.

But the impasse between Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer over whether there will be new witnesses and testimony — along with House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's refusal so far to send the articles of impeachment to the Senate — have left the situation unresolved.

"Nancy Pelosi is looking for a Quid Pro Quo with the Senate. Why aren't we Impeaching her?" Trump tweeted, mocking one of the accusations against



him before heading out for a two-week stay at his Mar-a-Lago resort for the holidays.

McConnell, Trump's most powerful GOP ally in the Sen-

ate, welcomed the president's emerging defense team Friday for a walk-through of the Senate chamber. White House counsel Pat Cipollone and leg-

islative affairs director Eric Ueland came to Capitol Hill to assess logistics.

A six-term veteran of the Senate, McConnell is acting very much though he has the votes to ensure a trial uncluttered by witnesses — despite the protests of top Democrats Pelosi and Schumer.

"We have this fascinat-

ing situation where, following House Democrats' rush to impeachment, following weeks of pronouncements about the urgency of this situation, the prosecutors have now developed cold feet," McConnell, R-Ky., said late Thursday as senators left town for the year.

"We'll continue to see how

President Donald Trump arrives with first lady Melania Trump to sign the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 at Andrews Air Force Base, Md., Friday, Dec. 20, 2019, before traveling to Mar-a-Lago in Palm Beach, Fla. AP

this develops, and whether the House Democrats ever work up the courage to take their accusations to trial."

McConnell has all but promised an easy acquittal of the president. He appears to have united Republicans behind an approach that would begin the trial with presentations and arguments, lasting perhaps two weeks, before he tries drawing the proceedings to a close. The Senate will reconvene Jan. 3.

That has sparked a fight with Pelosi and Schumer, who are demanding trial witnesses who refused to appear during House committee hearings, including acting White House Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney and former national security adviser John Bolton.

"They should have witnesses and documentation," Pelosi told The Associated Press. "This could be something very beneficial to the country, if the facts are there."

## US heads to court to build Trump border wall in Texas

**HOUSTON** (AP)—Three years into Donald Trump's presidency, the U.S. government is ramping up its efforts to seize private land in Texas to build a border wall.

Trump's signature campaign promise has consistently faced political, legal, and environmental obstacles in Texas, which has the largest section of the U.S.-Mexico border, most of it without fencing. And much of the land along the Rio Grande, the river that forms the border in Texas, is privately held and environmentally sensitive.

Almost no land has been taken so far. But Department of Justice lawyers have filed three lawsuits this month seeking to take property from landowners. On Tuesday, lawyers moved to seize land in one case immediately before a scheduled court hearing in February.

The agency says it's ready to file many more petitions to take private land in the coming weeks. While progress has lagged, the process of taking land under eminent domain is weighted heavily in the government's favor.

The U.S. government has built about 90 miles (145 kilo-

meters) of walls since Trump took office, almost all of it replacing old fencing. Reaching Trump's oft-stated goal of 500 miles (800 kilometers) by the end of 2020 will almost certainly require stepping up progress in Texas.

Opponents have lobbied Congress to limit funding and prevent construction in areas like the Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge, an important sanctuary for several endangered species of jaguars, birds, and other animals, as well as the nonprofit National Butterfly Center and a historic Catholic chapel. They have also filed several lawsuits. A federal judge this month prevented the government from building with money redirected to the wall under Trump's declaration of a national emergency earlier this year. Also, two judges recently ordered a private, pro-Trump fundraising group to stop building its own wall near the Rio Grande.

Even on land the government owns, construction has been held up. In another federal wildlife refuge, at a site known as La Parida Banco, work crews cleared brush this spring and the government

### ACROSS THE NATION

#### 6 die in Las Vegas apartment building fire; 13 injured

**LAS VEGAS** (AP)—A fire in a three-story apartment building in downtown Las Vegas where residents were apparently using their stoves for heat killed six people and forced some residents to jump from upper-floor windows to escape the heavy smoke before dawn Saturday, authorities said. Investigators reported that the fire started around a first-floor unit's stove and that residents had told them that there was no heat in the building, which sits a few blocks from downtown Las Vegas' touristy Fremont Street District. Residents reported awakening to pounding on doors around 4 a.m. By the time Matthew Sykes got his clothes on to flee, one end of his second-floor hallway was choked with thick black smoke, as was a stairwell, making it impassable for he and his wife. "The whole place was like one big black cloud of smoke—couldn't get down the stairs," Sykes told The Associated Press. Firefighters arriving at the scene began treating injured and using ladders to rescue numerous people already jumping or hanging from windows, fire department spokesman Tim Szymanski said. "The first thing that you think of is: We've got to rescue those people. A fall of 16 feet (4.9 meters) or higher can be fatal."

#### Texas man to be exonerated after DNA leads to new arrest

**HOUSTON** (AP)—Authorities said they will begin the process to exonerate a Houston man who was convicted in a 2010 fatal stabbing that investigators now believe was committed by someone else. Lydell Grant, 42, was freed on bond last month after a new analysis of DNA found on the victim's fingernails pointed to his innocence in the killing of 28-year-old Aaron Scheerhoorn. Authorities undertook a new investigation, and the Har-

ris County District Attorney's Office said Friday that Grant has been eliminated as a suspect and another person has been arrested in Scheerhoorn's slaying. "We are relieved that Lydell's wrongful conviction has had this important breakthrough. We look forward to his full exoneration at the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals," said Mike Ware, who is the executive director of the Innocence Project of Texas and one of Grant's attorneys. Grant has served seven years of a life sentence. Authorities now believe 41-year-old Jermarico Carter is the killer.

#### Cyber attack forces airline to cancel flights in Alaska

**ANCHORAGE, Alaska** (AP)—RavnAir canceled at least a half-dozen flights in Alaska on Saturday—at the peak of holiday travel—following what the company described as "a malicious cyber attack" on its computer network. The cancellations affected around 260 passengers, according to company spokeswoman Debbie Reinwand. The regional carrier canceled all flights involving its Dash 8 aircraft until noon "because the cyber attack forced us to disconnect our Dash 8 maintenance system and its back-up," the company said in a written statement. The airline serves more than 100 communities in Alaska, many of which are not accessible by road. The company is working with the FBI, other authorities and a cyber security company to restore systems. RavnAir Alaska later announced that it will operate a normal afternoon schedule on its Dash-8 flights. "We will be trying to add flights where we can over the next two days," the company said in a statement released at 1 p.m. "We have, where possible, rebooked passengers on other flights." PenAir flights and RavnAir Connect flights were still operating normally on back-up systems, Reinwand said.

# Asia

## 23 dead as protests grow against India citizenship law

**NEW DELHI (AP)**—Violent protests against India's citizenship law that excludes Muslim immigrants swept the country over the weekend despite the government's ban on public assembly and suspension of internet services in many parts, raising the nationwide death toll to 23, police said.

Nine people died in clashes with police in Uttar Pradesh on Saturday, said state police spokesman Pravin Kumar. He said most of the victims were young people but denied police were responsible.

"Some of them died of bullet injuries, but these injuries are not because of police fire. The police have used only tear gas to scare away the agitating mob," he said.

Around a dozen vehicles were set on fire as protesters rampaged through the northern cities of Rampur, Sambhal, Muzaffarnagar, Bijnore and Kanpur, where a police station was also torched, Singh said.

The backlash against the law marks the strongest show of dissent against the Hindu nationalist government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi since he was first elected in 2014.

The law allows Hindus, Christians and other religious minorities who are in India illegally to become citizens if they can show they were persecuted because of their religion in Muslim-majority Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan. It does not apply to Muslims.



Critics have slammed the legislation as a violation of India's secular constitution and have called it the latest effort by the Modi government to marginalize the country's 200 million Muslims. Modi has defended the law as a humanitarian gesture.

Uttar Pradesh state is controlled by Modi's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party.

An anti-terror squad was deployed and internet services were suspended for another 48 hours in the state.

Six people were killed during clashes in Uttar Pradesh on Friday, and police said Saturday that over 600 had been taken into custody since then as part of "preventive action." In addition, five people have been arrested and 13 cases filed for posting "objectionable" material on social media.

Police have imposed a British colonial-era law banning the assembly of more than four people statewide. The law was also imposed elsewhere in India

to thwart an expanding protest movement demanding the revocation of the citizenship law.

India's Ministry of Information and Broadcasting issued an advisory Friday night asking broadcasters across the country to refrain from using content that could inflame further violence. The ministry asked for "strict compliance."

In the northeastern border state of Assam, where internet services were restored after a 10-day blockade, hundreds of

women staged a sit-in against the law in Gauhati, the state capital.

"Our peaceful protests will continue till this illegal and unconstitutional citizenship

law amendment is scrapped," said Samujjal Bhattacharya, the leader of the All Assam Students Union, which organized the rally.

He rejected an offer for dialogue by Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, saying talks could take place when the "government was hoping to strike some compromise."

In New Delhi, police charged more than a dozen people with rioting in connection with violence during a protest Friday night in the capital's Daryaganj area.

Two U.S. Democratic presidential candidates, Sen. Elizabeth Warren and Sen. Bernie Sanders, denounced the new law on Twitter, and Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad criticized it at a news conference following the conclusion of an Islamic summit in Kuala Lumpur.

## N. Korean leader holds party meeting to bolster military

### SEOUL, South Korea

(AP)—North Korea said Sunday leader Kim Jong Un has convened a key ruling party meeting to decide on steps to bolster the country's military capability.

The meeting came amid speculation that the North could abandon diplomacy with the U.S. and launch either a long-range missile or a satellite-carrying rocket if Washington doesn't accept its demand for new incentives to salvage faltering nuclear negotiations by year's end.

The Korean Central News Agency said Kim presided over a meeting of the Central Military Commission of the Workers' Party. It didn't say when it took place.

It cited Kim as saying the meeting would determine "important organizational and political measures and military steps to bolster up the overall armed forces ... as required by the fast-changing situation and crucial time of the developing Korean revolution."

According to KCNA, the gathering decided on "important military issues and measures for organizing or expanding and reorganizing new units ... (and) changing the affiliation of some units

## Australia battles 'catastrophic' wildfires as PM rushes home

**PERTH, Australia (AP)**—Australia's most populous state was paralyzed by "catastrophic" fire conditions Saturday amid soaring temperatures, while one person died as wildfires ravaged the country's southeast, officials said.

"Catastrophic fire conditions are as bad as it gets," New South Wales Rural Fire Services Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons told reporters. "Given we have a landscape with so much active fire burning, you have a recipe for very serious concern and a very dangerous day."

Areas in western Sydney were forecast to hit 47 degrees Celsius (115 Fahrenheit). Cooler air was expected to move through New South Wales late Saturday, although authorities warned that strong winds could push fires in dangerous new directions.

New South Wales is in a seven-day state of emergency, with around 2,000 firefighters battling 100 wildfires.

Two firefighters died Thurs-

day battling blazes southwest of Sydney. Geoffrey Keaton, 32, and Andrew O'Dwyer, 36, were in a truck convoy southwest of Sydney when a tree fell and caused their vehicle to roll off the road.

Authorities confirmed Saturday that one person died and 15 homes were destroyed in South Australia as a wildfire ravaged the Adelaide Hills on Friday, just 40 kilometers (25 miles) from the state capital of Adelaide. Another person was critically injured after fighting to save his home from the fires.

That follows the death of a 24-year-old man in a road crash in South Australia on Friday, which sparked a fire in the area of the Murraylands.

Authorities said 23 firefighters and several police have also suffered injuries, as more than 40,000 hectares (98,842 acres) burned across South Australia.

"It is going to be a real scene of devastation, especially for those people in the Adelaide Hills who have been most affected," South Australia Pre-

mier Steven Marshall said. "We know that in addition to the buildings and vehicles lost, there are very significant losses in terms of livestock, animals, crops, vineyards."

The annual Australian fire season, which peaks during the Southern Hemisphere summer, started early after an unusually warm and dry winter. Around 3 million hectares (7.4 million acres) of land has burned nationwide during a torrid past few months, with nine people killed and more than 800 homes destroyed.

The devastation has put pressure on Prime Minister Scott Morrison, who has received criticism for going on a family vacation in Hawaii during the wildfire crisis. He apologized on Friday for any offense "caused to any of the many Australians affected by the terrible bushfires by my taking leave with family at this time."

Morrison cut short his vacation and returned home on Saturday night. He is due to visit the New South Wales Ru-

ral Fire Service headquarters on Sunday.

Debate has reigned on whether Morrison's conservative government has taken enough action on climate change. Australia is the world's largest exporter of coal and liquefied natural gas.

Fatih Birol, International Energy Agency executive director, believes Australia has missed opportunities to mitigate the impact of coal.

"I find the Australian energy debate far too emotional, far too nervous and far too hot. It is hotter than the climate change itself," he told The Sydney Morning Herald and The Age.

Protesters on Thursday camped outside Morrison's Sydney residence demanding urgent action on climate change.

Morrison, who critics have deemed a climate change skeptic, conceded earlier this month that "climate change along with many other factors" has contributed to the wildfires.

and changing deployment of (others)."

KCNA didn't elaborate. But South Korean media speculated the meeting might have discussed the restructuring of military units over the deployment of new weapons that the North had test-launched in recent months, and what steps it will take in coming weeks.

North Korea is to hold a higher-level Workers' Party gathering, a Central Committee meeting, later this month to discuss what it previously described as "crucial issues" in line with "the changed situation at home and abroad."

In Washington, the White House said President Donald Trump discussed "recent threatening statements" by North Korea in a phone call with Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. The two leaders agreed to continue close communication, it said.

Earlier this month, North Korea carried out two major tests at its long-range rocket and missile engine testing site. Experts said they were engine tests that indicate that North might be preparing for a banned satellite launch or an intercontinental ballistic missile test.

# World

## Macron vows to keep fighting extremism in West Africa

**ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast (AP)**—France's President Emmanuel Macron has vowed to boost the fight against Islamic extremism in West Africa as French troops killed 33 Islamic extremists in central Mali.

Saturday was Macron's second day of his three-day trip to Ivory Coast and Niger that has been dominated by the growing threat posed by jihadist groups.

"We must remain determined and united to face that threat," Macron said in a news conference in Abidjan. "We will continue the fight."

By Macron's side, Ivorian President Alassane Ouattara in Abidjan announced a "historic" reform of the French-backed currency CFA Franc, established in 1945 and used by eight states in West and Central Africa.

The currency's name will become the "eco" next year and all French officials will withdraw from its decision-making bodies, Ouattara said. In addition, the obligation for member states to keep half of their foreign reserves in France will end.

The currency will remain pegged to the euro, which guarantees its stability, Ouattara stressed.

Macron, who turned 42 on Saturday, welcomed the reform and praised the financial and economic empowerment of the region.

"I don't belong to a generation that has known colonialism ... so let's break the ties!" he said, adding that the currency was considered by



some, especially the African youth, as a post-colonial heritage.

Earlier that day, Macron announced that a French military operation killed 33 Islamic extremists in the Mopti region of central Mali on

Saturday morning.

He tweeted he was "proud of our soldiers who protect us." Two Malian gendarmes also were rescued in the operation, he said.

France has about 4,500 military personnel in West and Central Africa,

much of which was ruled by France during the colonial era. The French led a military operation in 2013 to dislodge Islamic extremists from power in several major towns across Mali's north.

In the ensuing years, the militants have regrouped and pushed further

**AP** French President Emmanuel Macron is welcomed by President Alassane Ouattara upon arrival in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, Friday Dec. 20, 2019.

into central Mali, where Saturday morning's operation was carried out.

On Friday evening, Macron met with French military personnel stationed in Ivory Coast, which shares a long border with volatile Mali and Burkina Faso. The visit included commandos who were involved in the operation in Mali last month during which 13 soldiers died in a helicopter collision.

Earlier Saturday, Macron and Ouattara highlighted a new training effort being launched. The International Academy to Fight Terrorism will be in charge of "training in Ivory Coast some specialized forces from across Africa," Macron said. "Then we will collectively be better prepared for the fight against terrorism."

On Sunday, Macron will pay tribute in Bouake to the victims of a 2004 bombing by the Ivorian air force during the civil war in the country, which killed nine French soldiers and an American civilian who had sought shelter at the French army base.

He also will pay a visit to Niger's President Mahamadou Issoufou in Niamey before returning to France, where a summit with West African leaders will be held in mid-January to clarify the strategy of the French military operation in the Sahel region.

## Legion of Christ finds 33 priests, 71 seminarian sex abusers

**VATICAN CITY (AP)**—The Legion of Christ religious order, which was discredited by its pedophile founder and the cult-like practices he imposed, says an internal investigation has identified 33 priests and 71 seminarians who sexually abused minors over the past eight decades.

A third of the priestly abusers were themselves victims of the Legion's late founder, the Rev. Marcial Maciel, while others were victims of his victims—a multi-generational chain of abuse that confirms Maciel's toxic influence spread throughout the order.

The Legion counted 175 victims of the priests, but didn't provide a number for the victims of the seminarians, most of whom were never ordained and left the congregation.

The Legion released the statistics on Saturday, the same day Pope Francis accepted the resignation of the Legion's biggest defender at the Vatican, Cardinal Angelo Sodano, as dean of the College of Cardinals.

Sodano, who was secretary of state under St. John Paul II, had for years blocked the Vatican from investigating sex abuse allegations against Maciel, even though the Vatican had documented evidence dating from the 1940s that he was a drug addict and pedophile. Under John Paul, however, Maciel was

adored at the Vatican for his supposed orthodoxy and ability to produce donations and vocations.

The Vatican in 2010 took over the Mexico-based Legion and imposed a process of reform after an investigation showed that Maciel had sexually abused seminarians and fathered at least three children with two women. The Vatican found he had created a system of power built on silence, deceit and obedience that enabled him to lead a double life "devoid of any scruples and authentic sense of religion."

Two-thirds of the Legion's priestly victims—60—were Maciel's victims, the report found. Most were boys between age 11 and 16.

The 33 priestly abusers represented 2.44% of the 1,353 Legion priests ordained since 1941, the report found. That percentage is far lower than national averages of credibly accused priests over a similar period in the U.S. or Australia, where the percentages are 5.8 and seven, respectively.

The Legion acknowledged that more victims may come forward with other accusations, and attributed the comparatively low percentage to the fact that 60 of the seminarians who abused weren't ordained as priests.

The Legion only published the

names of four U.S.-based priests who were among the 33 abusers, saying ethical and legal considerations prevented identifying the others. U.S. religious orders and dioceses have been publishing names of credibly accused priests following the re-eruption of the scandal there.

A former Legion priest, the Rev. Christian Borgogno, said the report debunks the Legion's effort to blame all its problems on Maciel alone and showed that abuse festered far beyond his inner circle.

In a series of tweets, Borgogno questioned the seemingly low number of abusers, noted some had been ordained even after allegations against them were known, and complained that the report said nothing about the web of cover-up that allowed Maciel and others to continue abusing.

The report acknowledged that it was limited in scope, didn't address issues of abuse of power or conscience, or matters of cover-up and negligence, but said that was an "important pending task."

It said it was publishing the report to as a first step on a "path of reconciliation" with victims, by recognizing the history of abuse in the order.

The Legion leadership is due to consider the report at a general meeting next month.

### WORLD BRIEFS

#### Guatemala bus crash kills at least 20 people

**GUATEMALA CITY (AP)**—A trailer truck collided with a passenger bus in eastern Guatemala early Saturday, killing at least 20 people and leaving a dozen wounded, according to the national disaster agency. It said nine of the dead were minors. Volunteer firefighters told reporters the truck appeared to have collided with the bus from behind in the municipality of Gualán, roughly 150 kilometers (95 miles) east of Guatemala City. Photos of the scene showed the truck toppled onto its side along a curve on the two-lane highway, with the bus a little further ahead, its rear section destroyed. The national disaster agency said the bus had been headed from the northeastern Petén region to the capital. It said the injured were taken to several hospitals in the region.

#### Mexico, US set up border inspections to stem flow of guns

**MEXICO CITY (AP)**—U.S. and Mexican officials met Friday to establish inspection points to stop the flow of illegal weapons across their shared border. Mexico's security ministry said the country will use technology to search for guns at border crossings in Tijuana, Ciudad Juárez, Nuevo Laredo, Reynosa and Matamoros. Security Secretary Alfonso Durazo uploaded a picture from the meeting to Twitter showing himself alongside U.S. Ambassador Christopher Landau and Mexican Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard, writing that the U.S. will also set up checkpoints and that the aim is to also crack down on money laundering.

#### Berlin Christmas market that was attacked in 2016 evacuated

**BERLIN (AP)**—Police on Saturday evacuated a Christmas market in Berlin that was targeted in a deadly attack three years ago in what turned out to be a false alarm involving an apparent case of mistaken identity. Berlin police tweeted on Saturday evening that they were evacuating the market on the Breitscheidplatz square in the center of the capital because of indications of a suspicious object. News agency dpa reported that police later said two men had attracted officers' attention because of their behavior. Initial suspicions that there was an arrest warrant for one of them, which arose because his name apparently was similar to someone on a wanted list, turned out to be unfounded. There were no arrests, but police said they decided to act because of the location's history. Some 350 officers were deployed.

# Health & Wellness

By CINDY KRISCHER GOODMAN  
SUN SENTINEL

In the midst of holiday preparations, it becomes easy to ignore your health or put off check-ups and doctor's appointments. But when you ring in the new year, you also reset the clock on your health insurance deductibles and out-of-pocket maximums, which for many employees are becoming increasingly higher.

To take care of your health, and save money, you will want to make some strategic moves in the last few weeks of 2019.

sure or emphysema, use the last few weeks of the year to meet with your primary doctor to make sure you are on the right medicine and make a plan for exercise and eating healthy during the holidays," she said.

Yes, we all tend to indulge during December, but Goldman said don't let that cause you to put off a doctor's visit. "Some people feel they haven't eaten as healthy or they are not following through on exercise plans, and they don't want to come in and get weighed," she said. "I strongly recommend you don't put off those visits."

Be sure to take advantage of the benefits available this calendar year,

## 5 things you should do for your health before the year ends

### 1 Get a checkup

Many insurances fully cover preventative care such as annual exams, and health screenings. Jennifer Goldman, a primary care physician with Memorial Healthcare System says it is not too late to make an appointment with your primary care doctor for an annual checkup, or schedule preventative screenings.

"Men and women should get a physical exam every year to screen for high blood pressure, high cholesterol and other risk factors," said Goldman who also is the medical director of Memorial's primary care group.

Primary care physicians can order screenings for colon cancer, breast cancer and bone density, often covered by insurers as preventative care.

"If you suffer from a chronic disease like diabetes, high blood pres-

### 2 Make the most of deductibles

Deductibles—the money you're required to pay out of pocket before insurance covers all or part of your health-care services—are becoming higher. If you have met your deductible, this is the time to schedule any medical treatments or procedures you put on hold.

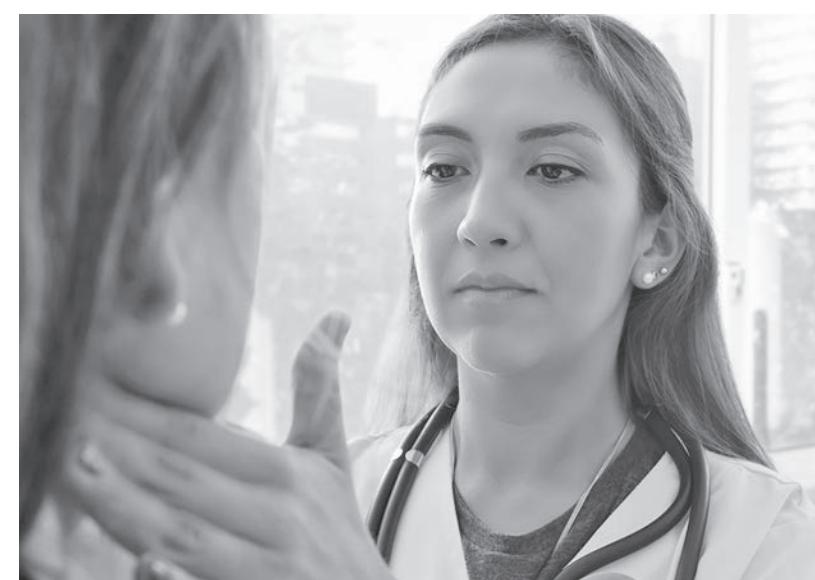
Jeanine Karp, of Miami, says she could have delayed a surgical procedure until next year but wants to use her health insurance wisely.

"I could have waited without any harm to my health, but I pushed for the surgery to happen before the end of the year so I can avoid additional out-of-pocket costs," she said. "It's not ideal

such as annual dental cleanings or eye exams, free eyeglasses or contact lenses and free flu shots.

Potatoes and sweet potatoes are root and winter vegetables—they grow underground and they are more available this time of year. Potatoes and sweet potatoes are also starchy vegetables; they provide more carbohydrates and calories than non-starchy veggies. But that does not mean they are completely off the table for people with diabetes. Small servings of baked or roasted potatoes with the skin are healthful choices.

Potatoes also contain more nutri-



to be recovering when parties and fun things are going on, but financially it makes more sense to do it now."

She reached her deductible this year after treatment and physical therapy for a broken wrist.

An estimated 85% of workers enrolled in an employer plan are on the hook for a deductible, up from about 59% 10 years ago, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation of Menlo Park, Calif. The average deductible was \$1,573 in 2018, up 39% over the past five years. By now, many employees have met their deductible and have only weeks to left with their health plans picking up the costs—making it essentially free care.

If you have reached your deductible, it's a good idea to order prescription drugs before the year ends. A 90-day supply of medications could cover you through March.

If you plan any medical treatments, research the costs beforehand. Memorial Healthcare System has launched a healthcare price website to provide a quote for the cost of medical treatments, factoring in your insurance information. There is also an option to research costs for those who don't have or don't want to use insurance.

"I think it's a legitimate request of patients to have that information," said Matthew Muhart, Memorial Healthcare System's executive vice president and chief administrative officer. "When you check the price and see your out-of-pocket cost, it's

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HEALTH IS WEALTH

Tan Siu Lin Foundation

Many insurances fully cover preventative care such as annual exams, and health screenings. Jennifer Goldman, a primary care physician with Memorial Healthcare System says it is not too late to make an appointment with your primary care doctor for an annual checkup, or schedule preventative screenings, even in the last few weeks of the year.

REB IMAGES/TETRA IMAGES RF/GETTY IMAGES/TNS

Adam Rubinstein said he sees a pick up in procedures this time of year, as people focus on their appearance going into a new year and seek out the newest laser treatments for their skin or to take away fat.

Rubinstein urges caution, though, with some procedures.

"Some people come in and want to look great for holidays so they will get Botox or fillers," Rubinstein said. "But you have to be careful not to get too close to Christmas or New Year's because you could bruise and not be happy."

### 5 Sign up for health insurance

As the year closes out, you still have time to sign up for health insurance during the Affordable Care Act's open enrollment. But act quickly: Dec. 15 is the last day to enroll in most areas.

The Kaiser Family Foundation has found 694,800 uninsured people in Florida could get a plan for 2020 and pay nothing in premiums, thanks to tax credits.

"If Floridians are considering going uninsured because they can't afford a plan, these \$0 plans are a no-brainer," said Joshua Peck, co-founder of Get America Covered.

Last year, 9 in 10 people qualified for financial help to make their monthly premiums more affordable. Free help is available at 1-800-318-2596.

### 3 Use all your FSA money

The Internal Revenue Service has set \$2,700 as the maximum contribution to a tax-advantaged healthcare Flexible Savings Account. But unlike a Health Savings Account which can carry over into the next year, an FSA must be used by Dec. 31 or you forfeit the remaining amount in the account. Some employers offer a grace period of 2 1/2 months; however, you would have to spend that before next year's funds are available.

Here are some expenses you can use your FSA money toward: mental health counseling, chiropractor visits, acupuncture, artificial teeth, hearing aids, eyeglasses and contact lenses. The IRS has a list of approved medical expenses.

Some people lose money simply by failing to claim the expenses they already have such as co-pays for prescriptions. Go through receipts now or ask your pharmacist for duplicates, and submit them as quickly as possible.

### 4 Use time off wisely

Anyone contemplating elective surgery may want to use their time off during the holidays strategically.

South Florida plastic surgeon



Don't sleep on winter vegetables, like sweet potatoes, squash and Brussels sprouts.

DREAMSTIME/TNS

ents than we may realize ... if we enjoy them as close to their whole state as possible. White potatoes, for example, provide protein, iron, vitamin C and potassium. And they contain resistant starch which feeds the good bacteria in our guts that can help control blood sugars. By vir-

tue of their dark orange flesh, sweet potatoes are rich in antioxidant nutrients that help fight off all the ills of modern society or at least certain chronic diseases.

Finally there's winter squash which differs from summer squash in that it has a hard outer shell that

opens to vibrant yellow or orange flesh. Two of my favorites are butternut and spaghetti squash.

Rich in dietary fiber and antioxidant nutrients, winter squash is sooo yummy when baked or roasted. Hardest thing about these vegetables is how to cut through the hard shell without cutting off your hand. Try this: Trim off the ends of the shell and place the whole squash in the microwave for about 2 to 3 minutes to soften the shell before you start to cut.

Barbara Quinn is a registered dietitian nutritionist affiliated with the Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula. She is the author of *Quinn-Essential Nutrition: The Uncomplicated Science of Eating*. Email her at [barbara@quinnessentialnutrition.com](mailto:barbara@quinnessentialnutrition.com).

## Quinn on Nutrition: Root around for winter vegetables

By BARBARA QUINN  
THE MONTEREY COUNTY HERALD

We tend to classify them all together, but winter vegetables are not always the same as root vegetables. Nevertheless, these veggies deserve our attention during these cold winter months.

Take Brussels sprouts, a veggie you either adore or abhor. These hardy vegetables that look like baby cabbages on stalks belong to the cruciferous family—best known for their anti-inflammatory and cancer-fighting effects. Brussels sprouts are extremely low in calories (about 25 per half cup) and are rich in antioxidant vitamins A and C. Brussels sprouts also provide vitamin K which benefits our bones and keeps our heart happy.

One holiday, my sister-in-law cut them in half, tossed them in a little olive oil, seasoned and roasted them in the oven until they were brown and crispy around the edges. When I saw how everyone gobbled them up (even the kids), this has been my go-to recipe for Brussels sprouts.

Potatoes and sweet potatoes are root and winter vegetables—they grow underground and they are more available this time of year. Potatoes and sweet potatoes are also starchy vegetables; they provide more carbohydrates and calories than non-starchy veggies. But that does not mean they are completely off the table for people with diabetes. Small servings of baked or roasted potatoes with the skin are healthful choices.

Potatoes also contain more nutri-

# Life & Style

## 30-plus years of 'Garfield' comic strips to sell at auction

**DALLAS** (AP)—Cartoonist Jim Davis is offering up more than 11,000 "Garfield" comic strips hand-drawn on paper in an auction that will stretch into the coming years, with at least a couple of strips featuring the always-hungry orange cat with a sardonic sense of humor available weekly.

"There are just so many, and it was such a daunting task to figure what to do with them so that they could be out there where people enjoy them too," said Davis, creator of the comic strip that appears in newspapers around the world and has spawned TV shows, movies and books.

Dallas-based Heritage Auctions began offering up the strips in August. The auction

house is selling two daily strips each week, along with longer Sunday strips being offered during the large-scale auctions throughout the year.

The strips span from the launch of "Garfield" in 1978 to 2011, when Davis began drawing the strip digitally. He says he still draws it by hand but now it's with a stylus on a tablet instead of on paper with a pencil, pen and brush.

Comic art collector Nagib Baltagi has purchased about 20 of the strips so far and plans to bid on more. The 36-year-old said the "Garfield" auction particularly resonated because he loved as a kid watching the cartoons and reading the books.

Baltagi, who lives in Mi-



ami, said he's drawn to the strips that feature several of the characters and have a sto-

ryline that strikes a chord, in addition to ones that ran on meaningful dates.

"I tend to go for the ones that kind of remind me where I was in my life," he said.

Indiana-based Davis says that over the years he gave some strips to family, friends and staff, while others are on displays at museums, including the Smithsonian Institution, and he even tried selling them on his website for a few years. But he kept most of them, he says, storing them in a fireproof, climate-controlled vault.

McDermott and producer Terry Leonard say the latest film will feature some of those phone calls as well as courtroom footage and interviews with those closest to Hernandez and Lloyd. The project, they said in a statement, "examines the perfect storm of factors leading to the trial, conviction, and death of an athlete who seemingly had it all."

Filmmakers and authors have had no shortage of material to work with in recounting the story of the handsome, polite athlete from Bristol, Connecticut, who was a high school standout and an All-American at the University of Florida before his three seasons with New England and subsequent fall from grace.

Brian Wiedman, a comic

grader at Heritage, says the daily strips are currently selling on average from around \$500 to \$700, and the longer Sunday strips are selling for \$1,500 to \$3,000.

AP

He said the value is often determined by "who is doing what, when and where."

"So Garfield eating lasagna, which is a trademark for him, that would be considered kind of one of the more expensive ones," Wiedman said.

Also adding value, he said, is an appearance by the strip's other characters, which include Garfield's owner Jon Arbuckle and Odie, his dog.

Caitlin McGurk, associate curator and assistant professor for the Billy Ireland Cartoon Library & Museum at Ohio State University, said that Davis "struck gold" by creating a character people love.

"It's kind of a classic comic you could pick up any day and feel good about," she said.

McGurk, whose museum has about 20 "Garfield" strips, likes the idea of the auction and noted that that the number of paper strips he's auctioning would be a difficult for a library to store.

## Netflix series examines 'perfect storm' that felled NFL star

**BOSTON** (AP)—More than two years after he killed himself in his prison cell, former NFL star Aaron Hernandez's story still fascinates—and now it's heading back to the small screen.

Netflix is releasing "Killer Inside: The Mind of Aaron Hernandez" on Jan. 15. The three-part documentary examines the meteoric but troubled—and violent—rise and fall of the late New England Patriots tight end.

A teaser for director Geno McDermott's film opens with chilling audio of a collect call Hernandez made to his fiancee, Shayanna Jenkins. Hernandez can be heard saying: "My whole body's shaking right now." Jenkins asks, "What happened?" and Hernandez responds: "You know my temper."

In July, Hernandez's estate settled a wrongful death lawsuit brought by the families of two men he was acquitted of killing. Prosecutors alleged Hernandez fatally shot Daniel de Abreu



In this Sept. 5, 2012 file photo, New England Patriots tight end Aaron Hernandez speaks in the locker room at Gillette Stadium in Foxborough, Mass.

AP

and Safiro Furtado in 2012 after a confrontation at a nightclub. Hernandez killed himself in prison in 2017 while serving a life sentence for the 2013 murder of semi-professional football player Odin Lloyd.

Hernandez's death came just a few days after he was acquitted of most charges in the double murder case. After his death, doctors found the 27-year-old

Hernandez had advanced chronic traumatic encephalopathy, a degenerative brain disease linked to concussions and other head trauma commonplace in the NFL.

Transcripts the Bristol County sheriff released last year of more than 900 jailhouse telephone conversations Hernandez had with family and friends showed he

## San Francisco musical, longest running in US, to hang up hat

**SAN FRANCISCO** (AP)—When you think of America's longest-running musicals, Broadway favorites such as "The Lion King" or "Chicago" may come to mind.

But there's a small San Francisco show that's been a must-see for tourists and locals alike for more than 45 years—and now the curtain is closing.

The campy "Beach Blanket Babylon" debuted in 1974, making it the nation's longest continuously running musical revue. Its final performance is set for New Year's Eve.

"It's going to be so bittersweet," said Curt Branon, one of its longtime perform-

ers. "We're all moving on to other things, but we all know that a magical moment, really, in time that this place has been for all of us."

The show spoofs politics and pop culture and features performers in colorful costumes and massive hats, including one featuring San Francisco's entire skyline. It was originally scheduled to run for only six weeks, but word spread, and it quickly became a quintessential San Francisco experience.

"Beach Blanket Babylon" has since been performed more than 17,000 times in front of 6.5 million people,

including Queen Elizabeth II, Prince Charles, David Bowie and Robin Williams.

The plot follows Snow White around the world as she searches for her Prince Charming. Along the way, she encounters an ever-changing lineup of political and pop culture figures. Recent characters have included Donald and Melania Trump, Nancy Pelosi, Vladimir Putin, Bernie Sanders and Oprah Winfrey.

Producer Jo Schuman Silver said the show is ending not for financial reasons but because she wanted it to go out on a high note and felt the time was right.

IN CELEBRATION OF HIS NEW LIFE

# Vicente Reyes Dela Cruz

Born on July 4, 1947 Called to Eternal Life on December 15, 2019



**In his new life, he now joins his:**  
**Parents:** †Ignacio Cruz Dela Cruz & †Remedio Reyes Dela Cruz  
**Sisters, Brother, & In-Laws:**  
 †Angelina DLC. / †Alberto T. Zarzoso, †Santiago R. / †Mariana C. Dela Cruz, & †Juanita R. Dela Cruz  
**His memories will live forever in the hearts of his:**  
**Wife:** Myrna D. Dela Cruz  
**Sons & In-Laws:**  
 Benson / Joan Dela Cruz (Ethan & Kurt), Billy Dela Cruz / Maria P.M. Tudela (Aiyana, Terrel, & Cameron), Byron / Risa Dela Cruz (Dante & Lucas), & Brian Dela Cruz  
**Sisters, Brothers, & In-Laws:**  
 †Angelina DLC. / †Alberto T. Zarzoso, †Santiago R. / Mariana C. Dela Cruz & Family, Luis R. / Josephine A. Dela Cruz & Family, George R. / Herminia B. Dela Cruz & Family, †Juanita R. Dela Cruz & Family, Ursula DLC. / Timoteo A. Galvan & Family, Apolonia DLC. / Samuel Domingo & Family, Maria DLC. / †Jose San Nicolas & Family, Ricardo R. / Teresita Dela Cruz & Family

Daily Rosary is being offered at San Antonio Church at 7:00 p.m. on December 16, 2016 to December 23, 2019 and December 25, 2019. On December 24, 2019, rosary is offered at 1:00 p.m. On Thursday, December 26, 2019, his remains will be escorted from Borja Funeral Home to San Jose Church followed by Responso at 8:00 a.m., followed by the Holy Rosary at 8:30 a.m., and viewing. Mass of Christian Burial will be at 11:00 a.m., followed by internment services in Chalan Kanoa Cemetery.

AP

# Q&A: Anthony Daniels talks long ride as C-3PO in 'Star Wars'

By JONATHAN LANDRUM Jr.  
AP ENTERTAINMENT WRITER

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Anthony Daniels went through a painful experience after not receiving the same amount of public recognition as other co-stars when the first "Star Wars" film was released in 1977.

But in time, Daniels' C-3PO character became one of the most popular in the franchise and he's the only cast member to have appeared in all nine of the main "Star Wars" films. The British actor plays the soft-spoken "protocol droid" built by young Anakin Skywalker that is fluent in six million languages. His gold-plated character also appeared in the franchise's spin-off "Rogue One," and had a cameo in "Ralph Breaks the Internet."

C-3PO's witty exchanges with fellow droid R2-D2 often served as comic relief, making the tandem fan favorites.

It's been a long ride for the 73-year-old Daniels, who believes his appearance in "The Rise of Skywalker," which opens in theaters Friday, will likely be his last film appearance as C-3PO. He highlights his "Star Wars" experiences in his new memoir "I Am C-3PO: The Inside Story," which was released in late October.

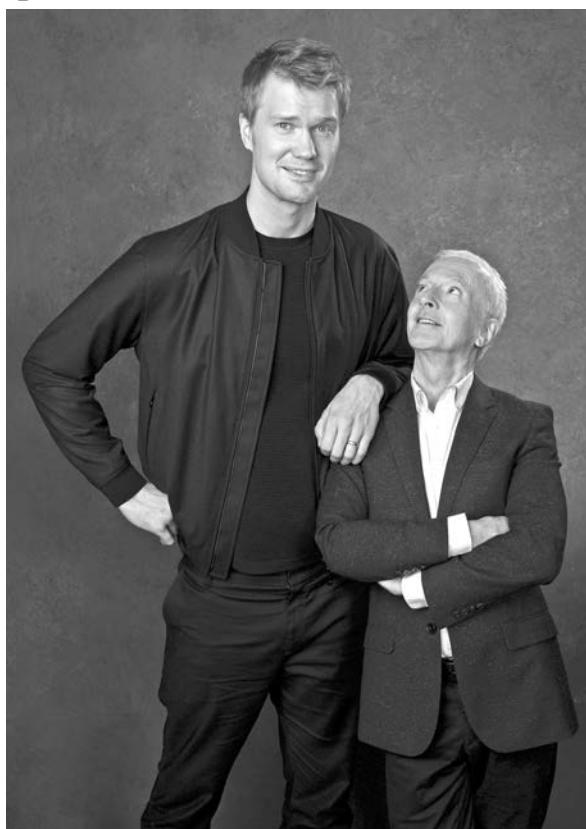
In a recent interview, Daniels spoke with The Associated Press about playing C-3PO and reflects on some of the best memories in the past 42 years in the iconic franchise.

**AP: What has it been like to be in all nine films?**

**DANIELS:** It's been a ton of work, and a ton of employment, which is great. As an actor, you're always looking for the next job. And often that next job for me has been something to do with "Star Wars." The friendship and companionship of being C-3PO has been quite a gift.

**AP: Are you surprised "Star Wars" made it this far?**

**DANIELS:** At the end of "A New Hope," the original film, I thought that was it. Twelve weeks of weird and difficult work. Not entirely wonderful. I thought that was it. Then they came and said "Let's make another one, then another." ... So I've been swept along by forces beyond



This Dec. 3, 2019 photo shows Joonas Suotamo, left, and Anthony Daniels posing for a portrait to promote their film "Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker" in Pasadena, Calif. Other photo, R2-D2, left, and C-3PO characters arrive at world premiere of "Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker" on Monday, Dec. 16, 2019, in Los Angeles AP

my control. But finally, it is ending.

**AP: Is "A New Hope" your favorite film compared to the rest?**

**DANIELS:** Yes, because I understood it. The story was simple enough that I got it. It got a bit complicated after that. It was an innocent film out of nowhere.

**AP: It was your favorite film, but you struggled with being overlooked after "Star Wars" release as well, right?**

**DANIELS:** It was difficult not being associated with the film when it first came out. That was a painful experience that lasted quite a while, but then changed over the course of time. It brings me here today with my name on the poster. Only parents care about that sort of thing.

**AP: What has been your most memorable experience?**

**DANIELS:** In the desert on the first episode. It was absolutely riveting. It had such an impact. Seeing the effect of people looking at me in the costume then seeing their reactions. You are the center of attention. They can't see you, but you're absorbing the

energy. That was pretty intense. That stays with me.

**AP: When you put on your costume, what goes through your mind?**

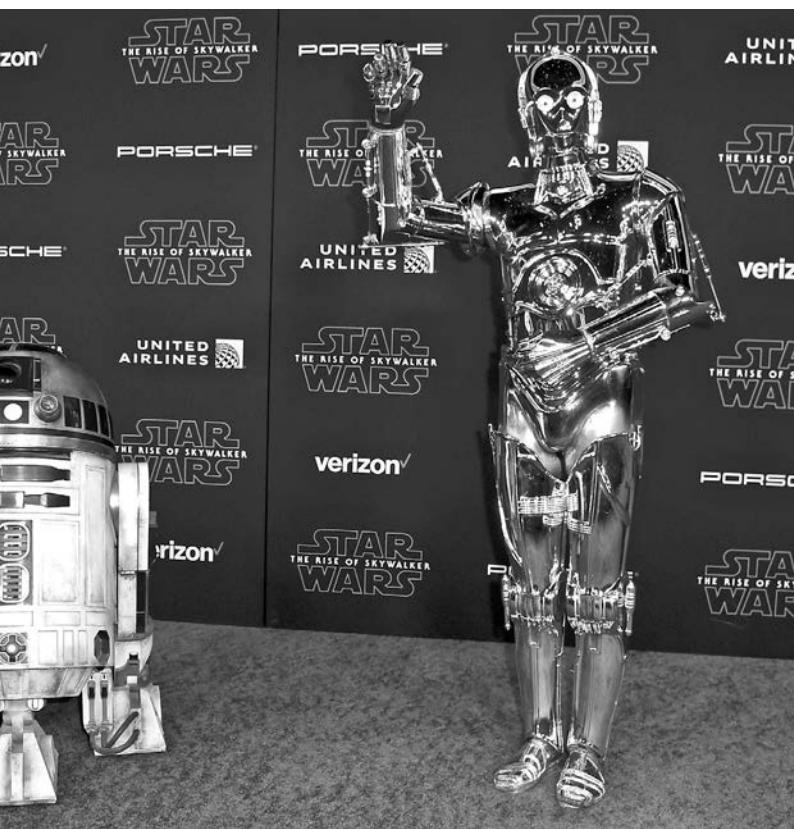
**DANIELS:** Here we go again. Why am I doing this? And then, adrenaline is a great thing when somebody on set says "action." Suddenly, your professional skills take over. The adrenaline gently sets in and you put up with stuff. You make it work as a professional actor.

**AP: What does the character, C-3PO, mean to you?**

**DANIELS:** He's kind of my friend, my companion. He's somebody I know quite well. I want to be with him all the time. I'm proud to know him.

**AP: What was it like for you not having Carrie Fisher around during filming "The Rise of Skywalker?"**

**DANIELS:** It was little wistful. But she is so there in all these films. You sort of forget that she's died, because she's just there. That's the magic of the media. Nobody is really gone anymore. You may not be able to



physically touch them. But they are there. There are fond memories.

**AP: What mark has your character and "Star Wars" left?**

**DANIELS:** It's so big that I kind of don't get it yet. I need to be away

from it for a while. Maybe I need to talk to more fans. So many people say "Thank you for my childhood." We have given people a lot of stuff. They have given back with all their enthusiasm and affection.

## Amy Winehouse exhibit to open at Grammy Museum

NEW YORK (AP)—The first-ever Amy Winehouse exhibit in the United States will debut at the Grammy Museum in Los Angeles next month.

The Recording Academy told The Associated Press on Thursday that the late British singer's popular outfits—including her halter dress worn at her final stage performance in Belgrade in 2011—never-before-seen handwritten lyrics and home video, journal entries and more from her family's personal archive will make up "Beyond Black—The Style of Amy Winehouse." The exhibit opens Jan. 17 and will run through April 13.

Winehouse died July 23, 2011, at her London home from accidental alcohol poisoning at age 27. She only released two albums, "Frank" and "Back to Black," but had a tremendous impact on music fans and her peers, being praised for her jazz-like vocals and honest lyrics. She won five Grammys at the 2008 show, which she couldn't attend because she was rejected for a U.S. visa.

The singer, whose hits included "Rehab" and "You Know I'm No Good," was also known for her distinctive look, including her beehive hairdo, cat eyeliner, ballet shoes, tatoos and more.

"Amy always credited my mother, her grandmother Cynthia, as a major influence, both stylistically—as she taught her the importance of grooming and having a

look—and musically," the singer's father, Mitch Winehouse, said in a statement. "She liked to call me a 'cab-driving Sinatra' and her mother's side of the family were also musicians. Amy not only brought her gift of music to the world, but also her fashion. We're eager for people to see her bold, beautiful spirit through all forms of her creativity."

The exhibit will also include custom-made, but never worn dresses by Winehouse's stylist, Naomi Parry, for the singer's canceled 2011 summer festival tour; Winehouse's yellow Preen power dress and red leather heart-shaped Moschino purse from 2007 BRIT Awards; Winehouse's 2008 Grammys outfit designed by Dolce & Gabbana; capsule collections designed by Winehouse for Fred Perry's line, including a black cotton twill varsity-style jacket with gray leather sleeves monogrammed with "Amy" in the front; and a mohair leopard-style pattern cardigan by Dolce & Gabbana that Winehouse was photographed wearing leaving one of her favorite places, the Hawley Arms Pub, in Camden, London.

"She had a clear vision of who she was and what she wanted the world to see," Winehouse's stylist, Naomi Parry, said in a statement. "Working with Amy was one of my most satisfying and creative times in my career. I'm excited for the world to finally see the looks we created for what would have been her 2011 summer festival tour."

## Strong first night for "Star Wars" falls short of previous 2



This image released by Disney/Lucasfilm shows, from left, Joonas Suotamo as Chewbacca, Oscar Isaac as Poe Dameron, Daisy Ridley as Rey and John Boyega as Finn in a scene from "Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker." AP

"The Force Awakens" director J.J. Abrams back at the helm after Rian Johnson directed "The Last Jedi," didn't appear to be affected by bad critic reviews. The film scored just 58% with critics on Rotten Tomatoes compared to

98% for "The Last Jedi," but its fan score is 85%.

The third film stars Daisy Ridley, John Boyega, Oscar Isaac, Adam Driver and Carrie Fisher and is expected to bring in \$200 million by the end of the weekend.

The second film in the trilogy, "Star Wars: The Last Jedi," had a \$45 million tally on its opening Thursday night in 2017.

"The Rise of Skywalker," with

# Author JK Rowling draws criticism for transgender comments

**NEW YORK** (AP)—J.K. Rowling is facing widespread criticism from the transgender community and other activists after tweeting support for a researcher who lost her job for stating that people cannot change their biological sex.

The researcher, Maya Forstater, had been a visiting fellow at the Centre for Global Development, which in March declined to renew her contract. A London judge this week upheld her dismissal, finding that her views of sexual identity were “absolutist,” even if they violate someone’s “dignity and/or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating

## UK's Prince Harry, Meghan, son Archie in Canada for holiday

**LONDON** (AP)—Prince Harry's office has confirmed that he and his family will be spending “private time” in Canada over the Christmas holidays.

Harry, his wife Meghan and their 7-month-old son Archie will miss Queen Elizabeth II's traditional Christmas gathering at her Sandringham estate.

Palace officials Friday night



**AP**  
In this Dec. 11, 2019 file photo, author J.K. Rowling attends the HBO Documentary Films premiere of “Finding the Way Home” in New York.

or offensive environment.”

On Thursday morning, Rowling tweeted a response that said: “Call yourself whatever

## Marc Anthony's luxury yacht goes up in flames in Miami

**MIAMI** (AP)—A luxury yacht owned by singer Marc Anthony partially sank in Biscayne Bay after it was engulfed by a massive fire that took 45 firefighters nearly two hours to extinguish. No one was injured.

The 120-foot (36.5-meter) boat was docked off Miami's MacArthur Causeway at the Island Gardens Marina when it caught fire Wednesday

you like. Sleep with any consenting adult who'll have you. Live your best life in peace and security. But force women out of their jobs for stating that sex is real? #IStandWithMaya #ThisIsNotADrill.”

The “Harry Potter” author is otherwise known for her liberal political views and many on Twitter labeled her a

TERF (Trans Exclusive Radical Feminist). Among those criticizing her was the Human Rights Campaign, which tweeted: “Trans women are women. Trans men are men. Non-binary people are non-binary. CC: JK Rowling.”

A spokeswoman for Rowling said that the author would not have any further comment.

Dade fire departments worked to contain the fire. They used fireboats to douse the flames.

The boat was partially underwater, but no other boats were damaged, the Miami Herald quoted Miami Fire Rescue Capt. Ignatius Carroll as saying. Flames could be seen from downtown Miami late Wednesday.

It wasn't clear what caused the blaze.

confirmed Harry's family is in Canada but did not provide details.

Meghan lived in Canada for many years before she married Harry while she was filming the TV series “Suits.”

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau welcomed the family with a tweet.

“Prince Harry, Meghan, and Archie, we're all wishing

you a quiet and blessed stay in Canada,” he said. “You're among friends, and always welcome here.”

The couple is taking a break from royal duties. Harry has said that he and his brother Prince William are going in different directions at the moment.

He has also complained about intrusive press coverage of his young family.

## Sierra Leone grants Idris Elba, wife honorary citizenship

**FREETOWN, Sierra Leone** (AP)—Idris Elba and his wife have been granted honorary citizenship in his late father's homeland of Sierra Leone.

Sierra Leonean authorities gave diplomatic passports Friday to the British star and his Canadian wife, Sabrina Dhowre, asking them to serve as “brand ambassadors” for the country.

While Sierra Leone is home to chimpanzees, pristine beaches and surfing,

the country is more widely known as the scene of a brutal war from 1991 until 2002, which was depicted in the film “Blood Diamond.”

Rebounding tourism was then badly hurt again by the 2014-2016 Ebola epidemic that killed nearly 4,000 people in Sierra Leone alone from the contagious disease.

On Friday, President Julius Maada Bio had breakfast with Elba and his wife.

The leader encouraged them to help “change the nar-

rative of Sierra Leone from a war-torn and Ebola-affected country to a country that is full of investment opportunities and one of best destinations for tourism,” a presidential spokesman said.

Elba, 47, was raised in the United Kingdom by his Sierra Leonean father and Ghanaian mother.

The actor, best known for his roles on “The Wire” and “Luther,” was named “Sexiest Man Alive” in 2018 by People magazine.

**LONDON** (AP)—Britain's Prince Charles has chosen an Associated Press photo taken on his historic trip to Cuba for his Christmas card.

The image by AP's Ramon Espinosa shows the heir to the British throne behind the wheel of a classic car in Havana alongside his wife Camilla.

American cars dating from before Cuba's 1959 revolution are a common sight in the country, but the one Charles drove was a British-built 1953 MG.

After driving the convertible to Havana's John Lennon Park, Charles described it as “the most beautiful car. It has an incredibly powerful accelerator.”

Charles, 71, visited Cuba in March in the first trip to the communist-run island by a member of the British royal family.

night, fire officials said.

Island Gardens Marina spokeswoman Nataly Tovar confirmed the boat belonged to the famous salsa artist. Two crew members were on board at the time of the fire, but they were able to get off safely and were not injured, the Miami fire department said in a news release. Their identities were not released.

The Miami and Miami-

## Nice car! Prince Charles uses AP Cuba pic for Christmas card



AP

In this March 26, 2019 file photo, Prince Charles drives a vintage car with his wife Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, during a cultural event in Havana, Cuba.

Espinosa has worked across the Caribbean for the AP. Earlier this year, he captured pow-

erful images of the devastation in the Bahamas wreaked by Hurricane Dorian.

## Mother-in-law takes in cats after mom's death

**D**EAR ABBY: My mom passed away unexpectedly, leaving behind two cats. My mother-in-law graciously took them in temporarily, which included shouldering the financial burden of a few vet visits.

After everything quieted, we asked her if she would be willing to keep the cats indefinitely because we rent, and re-homing them wasn't an option in our area. She agreed, but said when we want to take them, we can. We offered to compensate her for the vet bills, but she refused. Our relationship has always been strained, but, in that moment, she was very kind and generous.

Now, a year later, the cats have been renamed and are well cared for beyond what we could have ever given them. I, however, feel guilty. My husband and I don't want the cats. We will be buying a home soon, and our daughter is hoping to adopt a dog.

I do not want to take on a new obligation if I already have one to my mother-in-law. Those cats are my mom's final unfinished business, and I want to do right by them. How can I do right by my mother-in-law as well?

NOT A CAT PERSON

**DEAR NOT A CAT PERSON:** The cats have acclimated well to living with your mother-in-law—and it is entirely possible that she has grown to love them in the year they have been with her.

If she is aware that you will be buying a home, she should

be told that your daughter has her heart set on having a dog. Because three animals would be too much for you, ask if she would mind keeping the kitties after you move. She may surprise you and say she doesn't mind at all.

**(From where I sit, she sounds like a doll, so regard her generosity as a chance to mend fences and express your gratitude equally generously.)**

**DEAR ABBY:** In this holiday season of love, hope and miracles I ask your millions of readers to join me in remembering and honoring those courageous Americans and allies who created a “Christmas Miracle” during the Korean War 69 years ago. From November to December 1950, they fought one of the most savage battles of modern warfare and did the impossible by achieving one of the greatest humanitarian rescues in history.

Fighting in the frozen mountains at Chosin Reservoir, with wind-chill temperatures far below zero, outnumbered and encircled (120,000 to 30,000), our troops broke out to save 100,000 Korean men, women and children by Christmas Eve. Our soldiers endured frostbite and suffering with valor, ultimately sustaining 16,495 casualties, but inflicting 48,156 casualties on the enemy.

We are proud of, and indebted to, those members of our armed forces who suffered and sacrificed for our freedom. Please say a prayer for them and their families, and thank God

## DEAR ABBY

**By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**  
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

*Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.*



for the gift of these precious souls.

WITH CHRISTMAS LOVE, CARMELLA  
LaSPADA, NO GREATER LOVE INC.

**DEAR CARMELLA:** Thank you for your letter. This is the time of year when people often reminisce about family memories. In that spirit, I agree that we should also remember our collective history, and reflect on and give thanks for the bravery and sacrifice our service members and their loved ones have given us.

*To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.*



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**JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 07-2019**

Opening date: December 20, 2019      Closing date: January 10, 2020

Positions: (1) Electrician (Saipan)  
(1) ARFF General Maintenance-I (Saipan)  
(2) Custodial-I (Saipan)  
(1) ARFF Trainee (Saipan)

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CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO  
Executive Director

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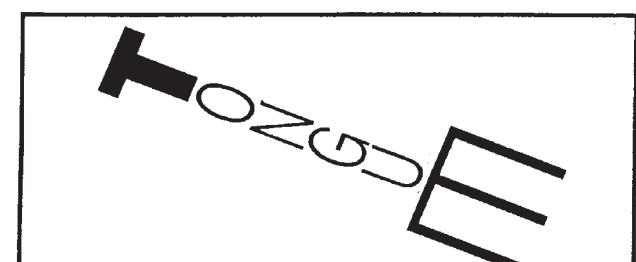
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# White Sox, Keuchel agree to \$55.5M, 3-year deal

**CHICAGO** (AP—The Chicago White Sox and left-hander Dallas Keuchel have agreed to a \$55.5 million, three-year deal, a person familiar with the negotiations told The Associated Press.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity Saturday night because the agreement had not been announced. Keuchel's deal includes a vesting option for 2023 that would bring the total value to \$74 million.

The 31-year-old Keuchel won the AL Cy Young Award with the Houston Astros in 2015 but struggled to find work last offseason as a free agent. He signed a roughly \$13 million, one-year deal with the Atlanta Braves in June and went 8-8 with a 3.75 ERA for the NL East champions.

The long-bearded veteran joins catcher Yasmani Grandal as a big-money addition to the White Sox this offseason. Grandal signed a \$73 million, four-year contract with Chicago last month.

The White Sox also brought back slugger Jose Abreu on a \$50 million, three-year deal, acquired outfielder Nomar Mazara from the Texas Rangers and added lefty starter Gio Gonzalez on a \$5 million, one-year contract that includes a 2021 option.

Keuchel and Gonzalez will join a rotation led by All-Star Lucas Giolito that also includes Reynaldo Lopez and Dylan Cease. Promising young right-hander Michael Kopech is also expected to return following Tommy John surgery.

Chicago is hoping to challenge in the AL Central behind a young core of hitters, including Yoan Moncada, Tim Anderson and Eloy Jimenez. Top prospect Nick Madrigal might also be ready to get significant time at second base. The White Sox were 72-89 last season, well behind the 101-win Minnesota Twins and 93-win Cleveland Indians.

Agent Scott Boras negotiated the deal for Keuchel and has earned his players \$936.5 million in contracts this offseason, including a \$324 million, nine-year deal between Gerrit Cole and the New York Yankees and \$245 million, seven-year deals for Stephen Strasburg with the Washington Nationals and Anthony Rendon with the Los Angeles Angels. Boras is expected to clear the \$1 billion mark this winter.

## Cespedes base pay cut from \$29.5M to \$6M

In New York, Yoenis Ces-



Atlanta Braves starting pitcher Dallas Keuchel throws during the first inning in Game 4 of a baseball National League Division Series against the St. Louis Cardinals, Monday, Oct. 7, 2019, in St. Louis. AP

leted video on Nov. 19 of Cespedes taking swings.

Next season, Cespedes can earn \$9 million based on plate appearances: \$250,000 each for 200, 250 and 275; \$500,000 apiece for 300, 350, 375 and 400; \$750,000 each for 425, 450 and 475; and \$1 million apiece for 525, 550, 575 and 650.

His bonus for All-Star selection was increased from \$50,000 to \$500,000, for winning a Gold Glove from \$100,000 to \$750,000, for Silver Slugger from \$50,000 to \$750,000, for World Series MVP from \$100,000 to \$500,000 and for League Championship Series MVP from \$50,000 to \$500,000.

He would get \$1 million for league MVP, \$250,000 for second and \$100,000 for third, up from \$125,000 for first, \$100,000 for second and \$75,000 for third in his original contract. Fourth (\$50,000) and fifth (\$25,000) remain the same.

He also would receive a \$2 million assignment bonus if traded to an AL team and a \$500,000 bonus if dealt to an NL team, the money owed by the club that acquires him.

Cespedes' amended deal says he does not have to make his \$50,000 charitable contribution in 2020.

Meanwhile, the Detroit Tigers needed power, so they're bringing in two players from the Minnesota team that set a major league record for home runs.

The Tigers agreed to one-year deals with free agents Jonathan Schoop and C.J. Cron. The deals are each for \$6.1 million and should add some power to a Detroit team that finished last in the American League in homers in 2019.

Schoop and Cron both played for Minnesota last season, helping the Twins hit a record 307 home runs. Schoop, a second baseman, batted .256 with 23 homers—his fourth straight season with over 20. He turned 28 in October.

"Heading into this offseason, Detroit was always on my radar as a team that I'd enjoy signing with," Schoop said in a statement. "I look forward to playing every day and being a leader on this young team."

The 29-year-old Cron hit .253 with 25 home runs last season. He started 110 games at first base.

## Average MLB salary drops for 2nd straight year

**NEW YORK** (AP)—The average salary in the major leagues has dropped in consecutive years for the first time since the players' association started keeping records more than a half-century ago.

The 988 players on Aug. 31 rosters and injured lists averaged \$4,051,490, the union said Friday, down 1.1% from \$4,095,686 last year. The average peaked at \$4,097,122 in 2017.

This was just the fifth decline since records started in 1967, when the average was \$19,000. There also were drops in 1987, when clubs were found guilty of collusion; in 1995, after the end

of a 7 1/2-month strike; and in 2004.

This year's drop followed two slow free-agent markets and new contracts with large signing bonuses for Mike Trout, Alex Bregman, Manny Machado and A.J. Pollock. Those four players received \$62 million in signing bonuses during 2019 that are prorated over the length of each contract in the calculation of the average. If the entire amounts had been counted for 2019, the average would have been about \$54,000 higher—more than the \$44,196 drop.

Those stars all receive huge

increases for 2020, and Gerrit Cole, Stephen Strasburg and Anthony Rendon agreed to \$200 million-plus contracts last week.

There also were 20 additional players on injured lists this Aug. 31, causing more players to be brought up from the minor leagues who made at or close to the \$555,000 minimum.

Several players with large salaries were released and then re-signed by other teams for the minimum, which is then used for the average, a group that included Homer Bailey, Matt Harvey and Matt Kemp. In addition, Troy

Cespedes' base salary next year was cut to \$6 million from its original \$29.5 million as part of an amended contract with the Mets that avoided a grievance hearing, according to details obtained by The Associated Press.

The oft-injured outfielder, however, would raise his pay to \$11 million if he has one active day on the major league roster and to \$20 million if he has 650 plate appearances.

Cespedes agreed to a \$110 million, four-year contract in December 2016 but could lose as much as \$29.6 million under the amended deal.

He hasn't played since July 20, 2018, and has topped 321 plate appearances just once

since 2015.

Mets general manager Brodie Van Wagenen, Cespedes' former agent, said in May the outfielder sustained multiple right ankle fractures in an accident at Cespedes' ranch in Port St. Lucie, Florida, where the club's spring training complex is located.

New York withheld part of Cespedes' salary, alleging he was hurt during an activity prohibited by his contract's guarantee language. The players' association filed a grievance, and the sides settled on an amended contract before the case was argued.

As part of the new deal agreed to Dec. 13, Cespedes' 2019 pay was cut from \$29

million to \$22,919,355. Information sent to teams this year listed his pay as \$14,811,828, so the amended contract appears to indicate he is receiving about \$8 million more for this year than the Mets originally paid.

If Cespedes doesn't start next season on the injured list because of a right foot or ankle injury tied to his May 18 injury, his base salary would escalate to \$11 million. His base pay would rise to \$11 million as soon as he is on the active roster or on the IL for a non-related injury.

A two-time All-Star, the 34-year-old won a Gold Glove in 2015 and a Silver Slugger the following year. He has

Tulowitzki and David Wright retired due to injuries, which meant their salaries were not included in the average.

Major League Baseball computed its average at \$3,894,220, down 2.8% from \$4,007,987 last year and \$3,955,920 in 2017.

The union includes option buyouts in its average calculation, while MLB does not.

Figures are based on the last day before active rosters expanded from 25 to 40 for the final time. Starting in 2020, there will be a 26-player limit from opening day through Aug. 31 and then 28 for the rest of the season.

played in only 119 games in the first three seasons of the contract, just 38 since the end of the 2017 season.

He was out between April 27 and June 10 in 2017 with a strained left hamstring, then did not play after Aug. 25 because of a strained right hamstring. He was sidelined between May 13 and July 20 in 2018 by a strained right hip flexor, homered at Yankee Stadium in his return, then went back on the DL.

He had surgery to remove bone calcification from his right heel on Aug. 2, 2018, and his left that Oct. 26. Minor league instructor and former Mets player Endy Chavez posted and then de-

# Giannis gets triple-double, Bucks rout Knicks



NEW YORK (AP)—Giannis Antetokounmpo had a triple-double, though his brother had the highlight.

And while the NBA MVP wasn't interested in talking about his stats, he certainly was impressed by Thanasis' one basket, a follow slam with his left hand in the fourth quarter.

"That was amazing. That was a crazy dunk. He came out of nowhere," Giannis said.

And the Greek Freak had a good seat on the bench to celebrate it after another easy win for the NBA's top team.

Antetokounmpo had 22 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists in his third triple-double of the season, and the Milwaukee Bucks followed their big victory over the Lakers by routing the New York Knicks 123-102 on Saturday night.

Avoiding any letdown two nights after winning a showdown against Los Angeles for the NBA's best record, the Bucks (26-4) made their first six 3-pointers to open a big early lead that grew to 29 points.

"Luckily we've got a group that is very professional, very motivated," coach Mike Budenholzer said. "I think they take their work seriously, they take their routine, the process seriously, and I think it reflected coming off a big win and coming out and playing the way we did in the first quarter."

Antetokounmpo had secured his triple-double by midway through the third quarter after playing just 23 minutes. It appeared for a while that he was going to be finished for the night at that point, but he was eventually called on for some fourth-quarter minutes.

He took only 10 shots, making eight.

"I don't look into stats," Antetokounmpo said. "All I care about is that we came in here, we got the job done. Got another one tomorrow."

## Rockets 139, Suns 125

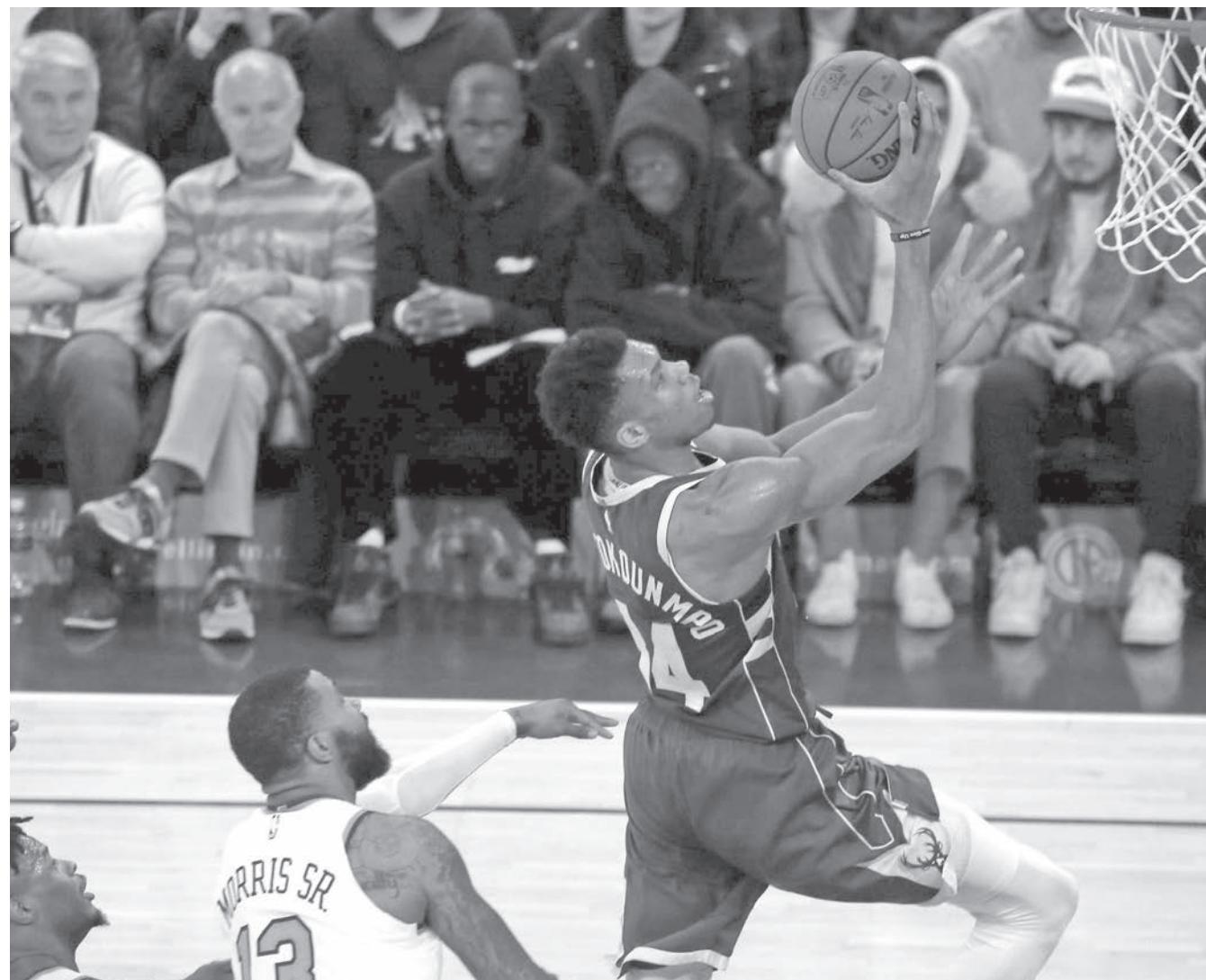
In Phoenix, James Harden scored 47 points, Russell Westbrook added 30 and Houston beat the Suns.

The Rockets won for the 10th time in 13 games and improved to 20-9.

Harden shot 15 of 27 from the field, including 9 of 19 from 3-point range. He leads the NBA with 38.5 points per game and blew past that number with his fourth quarter outburst, hitting his quartet of 3s in a span of about three minutes.

Westbrook added 10 assists, and Clint Capela had 14 points and 17 rebounds.

The Suns have lost six



straight games and fell to 11-18. Kelly Oubre Jr. led Phoenix with 26 points, and Devin Booker had 19. All five starters scored in double digits for just the third time this season.

## 76ers 125, Wizards 108

In Philadelphia, Joel Embiid had 21 points and 13 rebounds and Josh Richardson added 21 points to lead the 76ers over the Wizards.

Ben Simmons had 14 points, 11 assists and eight rebounds for the 76ers, who snapped a three-game losing streak overall and a two-game skid at home.

Bradley Beal had 36 points, eight rebounds and six assists for the Wizards. Washington has lost three in a row and nine of 11. Isaiah Thomas added 20 points, but was ejected with 2:53 remaining for going into the stands.

Philadelphia suffered its first two home losses in its last two times out, Wednesday against Miami and Friday versus Dallas. Both teams used zone defenses that neutralized Philadelphia's offense.

## Clippers 134, Spurs 109

In San Antonio, Kawhi Leonard had 26 points, nine assists

and seven rebounds in three quarters and won at the Spurs' homecourt for the first time since leaving the franchise.

Leonard was 11 for 16 from the field with four steals and two turnovers in setting a hurried pace the Spurs were unable to match.

Los Angeles had six players in double figures, including 21 by Montrezl Harrell and 20 by Lou Williams. Paul George finished with 11 points.

DeMar DeRozan, who had 13 points on 6-for-7 shooting in the first quarter, finished with 24 points to lead San Antonio. Marco Belinelli added 17 points.

## NBA considering \$1M per player prize for in-season tournament

After floating ideas to make a potential midseason tournament work in the NBA, the league appears to have an incentive in mind to entice players to participate.

The NBA is discussing a \$1 million per player purse for the winners of the proposed league-wide in-season tournament, according to ESPN's Adrian Wojnarowski. The tournament, which league officials started seriously considering this fall, wouldn't be implemented until the 2021-22 season at the earliest.

According to Wojnarowski, the league wants the tournament to start with pool-play that is part of the regular season schedule. Then, teams with the best records will advance to an eight-team single-elimination

tournament that would finish in mid-December.

Teams not making the eight-team field would then get a five-day break—something many fear some stars would actually prefer rather than competing in the tournament.

A mid-season tournament would be a fun experience for basketball fans everywhere, and would undoubtedly generate millions of dollars for the league. Convincing players to participate, however, appears to have been an issue.

The NBA has floated incentives to encourage a competitive tournament this fall, even considering gifting the winning team an extra draft pick, among other things. Teams are also reportedly

reluctant to give up two home games to accommodate the tournament, which could result in millions of dollars in losses.

The NBA is still considering adding a postseason play-in round, too, which more teams appear to be in favor of, according to Wojnarowski. Both the playoff play-in round and mid-season tournament would end up reducing the regular season from 82 games to 78 or 79 games, per the report. Some, however, could end up playing as many as 83 games depending on certain scenarios.

While it sounds like a cool idea on the surface, the tournament hasn't gone over well with everyone inside the league.

## Bulls 119, Pistons 107

In Detroit, Zach LaVine scored 33 points and Coby White added 19 to help Chicago outlast short-handed Pistons.

The Pistons were without Blake Griffin and Derrick Rose, and the Bulls pulled away late thanks to LaVine's outside shooting. He and White made five 3-pointers apiece.

Detroit has lost four straight.

Andre Drummond had 19 points and 14 rebounds for the Pistons, who swept the season series against Chicago in 2018-19 but have lost the first three meetings with the Bulls this season.

## LeBron may miss game vs Nuggets

Los Angeles Lakers star LeBron James is likely to miss his first game of the season when the Lakers host the Denver Nuggets on Sunday. James was listed as doubtful with a thoracic muscle strain around his rib cage.

James has played in all 29 games this season for the Lakers, averaging 25.8 points, 10.6 assists and 7.5 rebounds. But he did not practice on Saturday with the injury.

Head coach Frank Vogel said that James sustained the injury against the Indiana Pacers on Tuesday and played through it on Thursday against the Milwaukee Bucks. The Lakers lost both games—their first back-to-back losses this season.

Milwaukee Bucks forward Giannis Antetokounmpo goes up for a shot after getting past a trio of New York Knicks defenders during the first half an NBA game in New York, Saturday, Dec. 21, 2019.

## Trail Blazers 113, Timberwolves 106

In Portland, Damian Lillard scored 29 points, Hassan Whiteside had 16 points, 22 rebounds and seven blocks, and the Trail Blazers defeated Minnesota.

Andrew Wiggins scored a game-high 33 points for Minnesota.

Lillard set the tone for the Blazers early, scoring 19 points in the first half to push Portland to a 61-52 halftime lead.

In addition to Lillard, co-star CJ McCollum had 26 points and swingman Kent Bazemore scored a season-high 19 for the Trail Blazers, who played without a banged-up Carmelo Anthony.

## Nets 122, Hawks 112

In New York, Spencer Dinwiddie scored 39 points and Brooklyn overcame a 47-point performance by Trae Young and beat Atlanta.

Garrett Temple added 25 points, and DeAndre Jordan had 12 points and a season-high 20 rebounds for Brooklyn.

Alex Len had 23 points and 14 rebounds for Atlanta, which lost its seventh straight game.

## Jazz 114, Hornets 107

In Charlotte, Bojan Bogdanovic scored 26 points, Rudy Gobert had 17 points and 19 rebounds and Utah beat the Hornets for its fifth straight victory.

Donovan Mitchell added 20 points for the Jazz (18-11), and Joe Ingles had 14 points, including two pivotal 3s in the fourth quarter. Jazz coach Quin Snyder was ejected midway through the fourth quarter after arguing for a foul call.

Terry Rozier had 29 points and Devonte Graham added 22 points for Charlotte (13-19).

## Grizzlies 119, Kings 115

In Memphis, Jaren Jackson Jr. scored 18 points, Jae Crowder added 17 points and 10 rebounds, and the Grizzlies beat Sacramento.

Seven Grizzlies reached double figures in points, including Dillon Brooks, with 16. Grayson Allen and Ja Morant had 13 each as Memphis snapped a two-game losing streak.

Harrison Barnes led the Kings with 25 points, while De'Aaron Fox scored 22. Richaun Holmes had 18 points and 12 rebounds.

# 49ers eliminate NFC champions Rams



SANTA CLARA, Calif.

(AP)—The Los Angeles Rams had a chance to put aside their Super Bowl hangover, needing one critical stop to remain in playoff contention.

Instead, this up-and-down season got yet another disappointment.

Los Angeles' defense allowed quarterback Jimmy Garoppolo to convert twice on third-and-16 to set up Robbie Gould's game-winning field goal, and the Rams were eliminated from playoff contention with a 34-31 loss Saturday night to the San Francisco 49ers.

"We had our moments," running back Todd Gurley said. "We just couldn't figure it out. Sometimes, we figured it out. Today, we came out striking but couldn't finish. We have to be able to finish in this league. That's part of winning games and making it to the playoffs. You have to win those little games. We just couldn't find a way to win a lot of those little games."

The reigning NFC champion Rams (8-7) won their first three games this season, but a three-game losing streak followed. They never really found their groove again.

Despite all that, they got back into postseason contention with wins over Arizona and Seattle to start December. Their playoff hopes took a hit with a 44-21 loss at Dallas last week and were ended against the 49ers.

Los Angeles needed victories in the final two games, as well as two losses by Minnesota. Instead, they are the fifth team in the past 10 years to miss the playoffs entirely the year after making the Super Bowl.

"It's extremely disappointing," quarterback Jared Goff said. "You never envision something like this when you start the year. It's not even



San Francisco 49ers tight end George Kittle (85) scores as Los Angeles Rams inside linebacker Cory Littleton defends during the second half of an NFL game in Santa Clara, Calif., Saturday, Dec. 21, 2019.

driving to the New England 8, Allen overthrew Dawson Knox in the end zone and then was sacked by Adam Butler. Facing fourth-and-goal from the 15 with just over one minute left, he was forced out of the pocket and had to throw the ball up for grabs in the end zone, where it was knocked down by J.C. Jackson.

Cole Beasley caught seven passes for 108 yards, and John Brown had a 53-yard touchdown reception for the Bills (10-5), who have qualified for the playoffs for the second time since 1999. They have not won a playoff game since 1995, following their last division title, when Marv Levy's team beat Don Shula's Miami Dolphins in the wild-card round.

Brady, who is 42 and nursing a right elbow injury, improved to 32-3 against the Bills, and Buffalo hasn't beaten the Patriots in six games under coach Sean McDermott. This one was clinched when Burkhead ran it in from 1 yard with 5:11 left; Brady found Julian Edelman for the 2-point conversion to make it a seven-point game.

In Florida, Bradley Roby returned one of Jameis Winston's four interceptions for a touchdown and Kaimi Fairburn snapped a fourth-quarter tie with his third field goal, lifting Houston over Tampa Bay and its fourth AFC South title in five years.

Roby raced 27 yards up the right sideline after picking off Winston's first pass of the game, the sixth pick-6 the Bucs quarterback has thrown this season. Jahleel Addae's interception with 1:27 remaining, ended any realistic chance the Bucs had of fully overcoming Winston's mistakes.

The Texans (10-5) won despite not getting an especially sharp performance from Deshaun Watson, who completed 19 of 32 passes for 184 yards and one interception. The Bucs (7-8) sacked him five times and held Houston to one offensive TD on Carlos Hyde's 1-yard run in the second quarter.

The Texans ended Tampa Bay's four-game winning streak and are AFC South champions for the second straight year. They join the Patriots and Chiefs as the only teams with four division titles since 2015.

close to the standard we want to hold. It's sickening.

Goff had a game like his season, a few bright spots with too many negatives. He staked Los Angeles to a 21-10 lead in the second quarter with a 10-yard TD pass to Brandin Cooks and two more drives that ended in TD runs for Gurley.

But he also threw an interception late in the half that Fred Warner returned 46 yards for a score that gave the Niners a 24-21 lead.

Goff threw a go-ahead TD pass to Cooper Kupp in the third quarter and led a tying field goal drive in the fourth quarter. But he also took a key intentional grounding penalty

that led to a missed field goal after Los Angeles started its first drive of the second half at the San Francisco 25 following an interception.

Goff said this year's problems had little to do with last season's finish with a disappointing Super Bowl loss to New England.

"I think we were in plenty of games and had plenty of chances to win games," Goff said. "The ball goes here or there a couple of times and we're having a completely different conversation right now. The ball didn't go our way this year, and we didn't execute to our ability. It has absolutely nothing to do with what hap-

pened last year."

The closing minutes of this game will likely haunt the Rams for some time. They allowed Garoppolo to find Kendrick Bourne on an 18-yard pass over the middle to convert the first third-and-16.

Coach Sean McVay then took a timeout after a second-down sack put San Francisco in third-and-16 once again with 58 seconds left.

A blown coverage led to a 46-yard pass to Emmanuel Sanders, and all that was left was for the Niners to run down the clock and make the kick to knock Los Angeles out.

"Bottom line is you had two third down and I want to say

16s where we had a chance to get those guys off the grass, the way that we had played the whole night," McVay said. "I think those two plays are not indicative of the effort that our defense gave and it's unfortunate that they ended that way, because they had put together a really good performance against a tough offense, but those two plays hurt us and we've got to be better there."

## Pats, Texans clinch division titles

In Foxborough, Tom Brady passed for 271 yards and a touchdown, sneaked for a third-down conversion to set up another score and threw a downfield block on another scoring drive to help the New England Patriots clinch their 11th AFC East title in a row by beating Buffalo 24-17 on Saturday.

With Bills visiting for a rare late-season matchup while the division was still at stake, Sony Michel ran for 96 yards and Rex Burkhead rebounded for an opening-drive fumble to catch four passes for 77 yards and run for 20 more. Both teams had already clinched playoff berths; the Patriots (12-3) remain in contention for a first-round bye or even the No. 1 seed in the AFC.

Josh Allen completed 13 of 26 passes for 208 yards and ran for 43 more, including a first down on fourth-and-1 from the Patriots 30 with about three minutes left. After

## Women's World Cup may be held every 2 years



**SWITZERLAND**—The Women's World Cup could be played every two years rather than every four if FIFA likes the results of its study.

The organization announced Friday it was considering doubling the frequency of soccer's biggest tournament, which the United States has won the past two cycles.

As part of its push to support the women's game, FIFA president Gianni Infantino said Friday the organization is looking into hosting the tournament every two years

rather than every four.

"This is something we need to consider and we are considering it," Infantino said. "There are a lot of exciting points with regards to women's football in the next few years."

He said the idea was first offered by the French federation and its president, Noel Le Graet, in July. Le Graet proposed it given its "incredible impact for the development of the game" compared to club soccer.

FIFA announced in late July it would fast-track expanding the Women's World Cup from 24 teams. Begin-

ning in 2023, the tournament will be 32 teams based on "evidence" of success, Infantino said.

While FIFA "studies" if it should play the Women's World Cup more frequently, it still has yet to decide where the next one will be played. That date is now 3 1/2 years away, whereas the men's tournaments are decided through 2026. The men's joint North American bid with the United States, Mexico and Canada was chosen in June 2018, two cycles beforehand.

When the organization announced an expanded field

for 2023, it extended the bidding given the additional teams and games. That deadline was Friday and there are four bids FIFA is considering: Brazil, Japan, Colombia and a joint one by Australia and New Zealand.

Joint bids by South Korea, doing so with North Korea, and South Africa were withdrawn before the deadline.

FIFA will assess the bids and submit evaluations to the FIFA Council. A vote will be held in June. Even without the pushed deadline, the vote was not scheduled until March 2020 for a tournament a cycle away.

# Federer: Star's legacy isn't at risk with late decline

**DUBAI, United Arab Emirates** (AP)—Roger Federer arrives for his interview at the precise appointed time, steering his white sedan into a parking spot in an industrial area dotted by art galleries about 15 minutes from his luxury apartment in this home-away-from-home.

After obliging a selfie request from someone on the street, Federer makes his way up to a second-story loft area and sits. He crosses his

legs, kneads his right calf and winces.

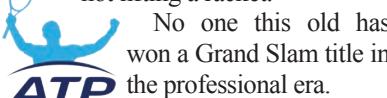
"Just started training. I'm surprised I could walk the stairs as good as I have," Federer says with a laugh. "My calves are, like, killing me. Just getting back into it. The shock on the body is, I don't want to say 'immense,' every time, but I've been on vacation for two weeks. The shock just hits you hard."

Ah, the ravages of age.

Federer, who won the first

of his men's-record 20 Grand Slam titles when he was 21 and now is 38, explains to The Associated Press that he must "go back to the drawing board" after "just missing out on The Big One," a reference to his fifth-set tiebreaker loss to Novak Djokovic in the Wimbledon final in July. So all of just two days into Federer's preparation for next season—he flies to Melbourne on Jan. 9, a week before the Austra-

lian Open draw—he is taking a 48-hour break, sitting out his two-a-day fitness sessions and not lifting a racket.



No one this old has won a Grand Slam title in the professional era.

As a younger man, Federer says, he didn't allow himself such a respite, working six or eight days in a row to get going. But now? The "waves," he calls them, making an undulating motion with his famous right arm -- time

on, then time off -- offer his body a chance to recover. They also let him "go through the wall" on the day before a rest period, because "otherwise, you maybe would hold back just ever so slightly, because you just don't know how you're going to feel the next day."

Federer recognizes that continuing to play tennis at a high level long past the age when many greats of the past were done (his idol, Pete Sampras,

competed for the final time at 31) means he repeatedly faces questions—from fans, from the media, from those around him—about how long he will continue on tour.

And while he can't provide a definitive answer—because, quite simply, he says he doesn't have one -- Federer is willing to discuss this aspect of the subject: He does not consider it important to walk away at the top of his game and the top of his sport

## EASY

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sion, Blue Haus dominated PPG right from the get-go for the lopsided victory.

A 14-2 scoring in the first six minutes of the game put Blue Haus in control and the squad was never threatened after that en route to the 23-point winning margin.

Errol Peredo and Junar Guiab combined for 10 of Blue Haus' first 14 points, while Tito Alano made the initial basket for PPG. Peredo and Guiab continued to do the damage for Blue Haus and to make matters worse for PPG, Tony Diaz and Ray Culala also hit their targets, handing the losing squad a beating.

Guaiab led all scorers with his 28 points, while Peredo added 22, and Culala and Diaz finished with 20 and 19 markers, respectively.

While Blue Haus drew double figures from multiple



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Professional player Jericho Cruz, back row fifth left, joins Lakay players for a group photo before their game against the Hoopaholics in the Open Division of the United Filipino Organization IT&E 2019 Basketball League last Saturday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

players, Sonny Ebuen was the lone bright spot on PPG, as the forward fired 20 points, 18 of

them were from beyond the arc. Robert Sanciangco was the only other double-figure

scorer for PPG with his 10 markers, but his baskets came when the game was already in the bag for Blue Haus.

### Masters Division

**Blue Haus** 99—Guiab 38, E. Peredo 22, Culala 20, Diaz 19, Buenabajo 6, Garcia 4, R. Peredo 2.

**PPG** 76—Ebuen 20, Sanciangco 10, Alano 9, Salazar 8, Montoya 7, Elchico 4, Atalig 4, Abadilla 4, Lonzaga 4, Del Rio 2.

**Scoring by quarters:** 22-12, 50-25, 82-48, 99-76.

### Open Division

**Lakay** 88—Cruz 19, Cabrera 17, Williams 13, Bernardo 9, Arian 8, Capalad 7, Reyes 4, Toribio 4, Alegre 3, Solis 2, Galulu 2.

**Hoopaholics** 71—Lauron 12, Manibusan 11, Aughenbaugh 11, Deleon Guerrero 11, Cadiang 10, Tenorio 10, Cabrera 2, Itibus 2.

**Scoring by quarters:** 22-25, 45-26, 72-48, 88-71.

## NMBA

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community and are always eager to learn new games.

"We encouraged our students to be passionate not only in their studies, but also in other activities in their lives, including sports. We want to see our students enjoy playing sports and not spending too much time playing video games. Sports help make them healthy. It allows them to develop teamwork and other positive attitudes that they can

use to be successful in life," Pang said.

The Agape principal added that badminton is something that their students will definitely enjoy since it is played indoor and the Torchbearers just finished constructing their multipurpose gymnasium at the campus compound in Middle Road.

Meanwhile, NMBA president Merlie Tolentino said they plan to introduce Shuttle Time to more schools next season. By reaching out to schools, NMBA is aiming to



Northern Mariana Badminton Association player Janelle Pangilinan, left, distributes Shuttle Time/Badminton World Federation wristbands to Agape Christian School students. **CONTRIBUTED PHOYO**



Northern Mariana Badminton Association players and Agape Christian School students and officials pose for a group photo after NMBA brought Shuttle Time to the Torchbearers at the Agape Multipurpose Gymnasium last Thursday. **CONTRIBUTED PHOYO**

discover young players who may represent the CNMI in regional competitions, such



An Agape student serves, while his teammate gets ready for the next play. **CONTRIBUTED PHOYO**



White Sox,  
Keuchel agree  
to \$55.5M,  
3-year deal

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Giannis gets  
triple-double,  
Bucks rout  
Knicks

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE



## NMBA brings Shuttle Time to Agape students

Northern Marianas Badminton Association wrapped up the 2019 season on a positive note by introducing Shuttle Time to students of Agape Christian Academy.

Shuttle Time, according to the Badminton World Federation offers school access to free resources, training, and equipment to support the teaching of enjoyable and safe badminton activities to children in

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Nate Guerrero, left, demonstrates to Agape Christian School students the proper way of holding a racket last Thursday at the Agape Multipurpose Gymnasium.

the 5 to 15 age groups. BWF, the international governing body for the sport of badminton as recognized by the International Olympic Committee, launched the program in 2012 with the goal of making badminton one of the world's most popular and accessible school sports. Seven years after its inception, Shuttle Time has reached over 130 countries, across five continental regions, including Oceania Badminton where NMBA is a member.

Nate Guerrero, Janelle Pangilinan, and Ezekiel Macario, who represented NMBA and the CNMI to the



2019 Pacific Games in Samoa last summer, assisted more than 40 students from Agape for more than one hour last Thursday, teaching them the basic of the badminton and conducting drills that helped participants work on their footwork and coordination.

"We are very happy to see a lot of you coming out here to learn badminton. Keep the interest in the sport and keep practicing," Guerrero said.

Agape principal, pastor Kok H. Pang, thanked NMBA for making the program available to their students, who have been active in the sports

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# Easy win for Blue Haus, Lakay

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO  
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REPORTER

The Jericho Cruz-led Lakay routed the Hoo-paholics, 88-71, while Blue Haus also coasted past PPG Pittsburgh Paints, 99-76, in the United Filipino Organization IT&E 2019 Basketball League last Saturday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Cruz, a former member of the CNMI Men's National Team and now plays in a professional league in the Philippines, suited up for Lakay as a guest player and powered his squad to an easy win in their exhibition match against the Hoo-

paholics in the Open Division. The guard top-scored for Lakay with his 19 markers, making up for a slow start in the first quarter by posting 17 markers in the last three periods, 9 of them came from the 3-point area.

With Cruz beginning to get into his rhythm in the second canto, Lakay turned a 22-15 advantage into a double-digit lead at the break, 48-26. Cruz scored 7 points in the second frame after recording only one field goal in the first period.

The visiting player added 6 more—off two triples—in the third canto and drew help from four other Lakay players, who made at least two baskets apiece, to break the game wide open, 72-48, entering the fourth canto.

The big lead after the third period was good enough for Cruz and company to secure the twin-digit winning margin despite registering their lowest output (16) in a quarter in the final frame.

Meanwhile, in the Masters Divi-

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO  
Blue Haus' Errol Peredo takes off for a layup during the second half of their game against PPG in the Masters Division of the United Filipino Organization IT&E 2019 Basketball League last Saturday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

## Los Viejos, Eats Easy prevail in opener

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO  
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REPORTER

 Eats Easy and Los Viejos earned contrasting wins in the pair of opening matches in the 8x8 Masters League 2019 at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

**See LOS VIEJOS on Page 27**

ROSELYN B. MONROYO  
Los Viejos' Emory Fitial, left, beats Paire Football Club's Travis Spaeth to the ball during their game in the 8x8 Masters League 2019 yesterday at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

